

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

The Jesuit Educational
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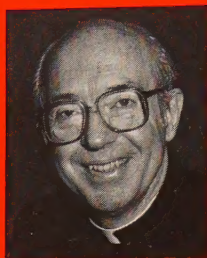
Growth at Midlife

Women Religious as Mentors

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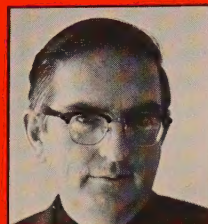
Imagining Paradise



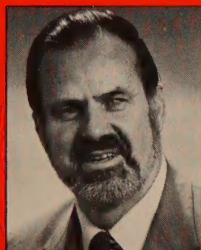
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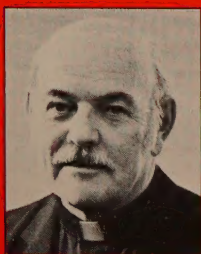
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The quarterly journal Human Development (ISSN 0197-3096) is published by the Jesuit Educational Center for Human Development, 42 Kirkland St., Cambridge, MA 02138. This is a nonprofit organization established to be of service to persons involved in religious leadership and formation, spiritual direction, pastoral care, and education. Subscription rate \$20.00 U.S. All other countries: \$27.00. Single copies \$7.00 in the U.S. & Canada. All other countries \$8.00. Second class postage paid in Boston and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send 3579 to Human Development, P.O. Box 3000, Dept. HD, Denville, NJ 07834. Copyright 1989 by Human Development. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher.

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Letters to the editor and all other correspondence may be sent to HUMAN DEVELOPMENT, 42 Kirkland Street, Cambridge, MA 02138. (617) 547-1250.

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HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

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Authors are responsible for the completeness and accuracy of proper names in both text and bibliography. Acknowledgments must be given when substantial material is quoted from other publications. Provide names of author(s), title of article, title of journal or book, volume number, page(s), month and year, and publisher's permission to use material.

Illustrations, if any, should be submitted as high-quality, glossy, unmounted black and white photographic prints. Do not send original artwork.

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EDITOR'S PAGE

DREADED EVENTS CAN BRING BLESSINGS

Most of the events that are brought to our attention by the daily newspapers we read or the news programs we watch nightly on television have little power to arouse us emotionally or to make a difference in our lives. Occasionally, however, some notable misfortune is reported that touches our hearts at a very deep level, provoking us first to empathize with the victim and then to consider, anxiously, how some similar occurrence might suddenly disrupt the even tenor of our own existence.

Such an incident was the recent, unexpected, and unceremonious firing of coach Tom Landry by the new owner of the Dallas Cowboys professional football team. Shock, anger, and resentment were immediately felt by millions of people throughout the nation, including many who had never become fans of the Cowboys but who had nonetheless developed a profound admiration for the legendary Landry during the 29 years he had guided his always exciting and often dazzling Dallas team. People felt sorry for him for a while. Then worries about their own futures began to invade their minds: If this awful thing could happen to Tom Landry, what sudden occupational catastrophe could one of these days befall *me*?

Coach Landry achieved a magnificent record for Dallas, at least between 1966 and 1983, when his players won 209 games and lost only 81. He led them through 20 consecutive winning seasons to 13 division championships, five Super Bowl appearances, and two Super Bowl victories. But during the past three years, his Cowboys won only 17 times, suffering defeat on 30 occasions. His last season brought only three wins, along with 13 losses. Still, only days before he was surprisingly sacked, Landry announced his intention to go on

coaching the Dallas team for at least four more years, "because I just don't want to leave the Cowboys when they're down."

While Landry's team was beginning to lose more frequently than it won, a rising young coach at Miami University, Jimmy Johnson, was establishing a record of 52 victories and a mere 9 defeats, crowned by a national championship in 1987. It was Johnson who was awarded the Dallas coaching job the day the 64-year-old Landry was fired—a replacement that left the Cowboys players and their followers furious over the abrupt and insensitive way in which the idolized Landry had been treated. He wept when he said goodbye to his team the following day, and in his disappointment he stated that he didn't ever want to coach again. But, vaguely, Landry concluded, "I can't stay inactive though, so I will have to do something."

A disillusioning event like that could easily occur in almost anyone's life. When we are young, vigorous, and effective in our work, our career can appear endless. As years pass and we gradually win a reputation for reliable performance and accomplishments, we can hardly foresee the possibility that our work (even though it depends for its success on the collaboration of others) will someday be judged inadequate, and someone younger and more attractive to our employer will be brought in to take our place. But one day, if we live long enough, the moment will arrive when either firing or retirement will terminate our prized career. Then, like Landry, we will be "finished." But we will also, as he said, "have to do something" with the remaining years God allots to our lifetime.

What will we do with the leftover seasons if Landry's fate becomes ours? Some people will fall into depression and exist joylessly, in anger and bitterness, until the end of their days. Others will strive willfully to accept their post-career situation, then try to make the most of every day that is given to them. Father James Torrens' article, "Imagining Paradise" (starting on page 42 of this issue), gives encouragement to these hopeful individuals. He shows that as time runs out in one's

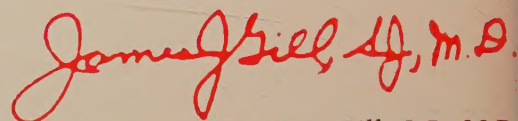
life, it is a blessing, when the opportunity finally arrives, to be able to sit back and enjoy reading the great classics in literature, such as Dante's works—and to grapple theologically and spiritually with such profound and tantalizing questions as "What lies ahead for me when this life of mine finally comes to an end?"

When our years of work are over, there will also be time for all of us to savor the treasures of music, theater, opera, and art that await a chance to enrich our liberated days. Time will be available, too, for expanding and deepening our friendships and exploring the loveliness of nature with those we love. Most precious of all, there will be time for spiritual growth, through reading and prayerful contemplation, that will deepen our knowledge and love of God. Far from being a disaster, the end of our work career can afford us a chance to communicate to the young people we love, for their enrichment, whatever God-given wisdom we have gleaned from the experiences of our lifetime.

What is going to happen to coach Tom Landry now? It depends on what he has been doing with his life up to the present moment. If all his days

have been filled with work and little else, a chronic feeling of emptiness and loneliness may spoil the rest of his years. But if he has prepared himself to face this season of retirement, the days ahead may well turn out to be the most rewarding ones in his life.

With wisdom, Landry often reminded his players and other young people that "life is not an undefeated season." The coach was right: we all experience some victories and some losses. But there is no loss—not even that of being fired—that can keep us from turning the future into a time of love and joy. There are so many things of beauty in this universe of ours, and the art of living—especially in our later years—consists in knowing the way to fathom and gratefully relish their loveliness. May God teach us all how!



James J. Gill, S.J., M.D.
Editor-in-Chief

Self-Help Groups Reduce Stress

According to the California Self-Help Center, support groups are formed to help people cope with four principal sources of stress: (1) mental or physical illness, such as depression, agoraphobia, cancer, diabetes, or stroke; (2) addictive or obsessive behavior, such as drinking, smoking, drug-taking, overeating, or overspending; (3) personal crises and life changes, such as bereavement or divorce; and (4) caring for disabled family members, such as handicapped children, or spouses with Alzheimer's disease.

The *University of California Wellness Letter* reports that studies about self-help groups are optimistic in their findings. Several studies, for example, have shown that recently widowed women who receive support from other widows become less anxious about their widowhood, make new friends faster, and resume normal social life more quickly than widows who do not receive such support. Similarly, a year-long study of women with breast cancer revealed that those in a control group experienced more fatigue, tension, depression, and phobias than those who attended a weekly support group.

Not everyone is able to benefit from the support that groups attempt to offer. The *Newsletter* explains: "Some people in acute crisis may need more than

self-help; they may find they're better off in the hands of a professional therapist. Groups may also prove unsuitable for people whose communication skills aren't up to dealing with the emotionally charged issues that dominate meetings." Furthermore, group members who "share" more than their fair share "aren't likely to get or give much support and may block the support process from operating for others."

It is recommended that persons who think they might be able to help themselves by joining a support group consult their doctor, a local hospital, or social service agencies. Groups are often listed in the Yellow Pages under the heading "social service organizations." A number of clearinghouses have been established to help individuals make contact with the right groups. One is the California Self-Help Center, which may be reached at (800) 222-5465 in California, (213) 825-1799 elsewhere. The clearinghouse of the St. Clares-Riverside Medical Center provides comprehensive lists of self-help groups nationwide. It also offers guidance on forming a group yourself, if an appropriate one does not already exist in your area. For information, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to the Center, Pocomo Road, Denville, New Jersey 07834; telephone (201) 625-7101.

Women Religious as Mentors

Mary Elizabeth Kenel, Ph.D.

While reading Ruthellen Josselson's book *Finding Herself*, I was struck by two of her statements. The first raised the question of why there are so few mentors for women. The second noted that religion is a highly significant aspect of many women's lives but that its influence on identity formation has not been given enough attention in psychological theory and research.

In reflecting on the need for both mentors and religion in the lives of today's women, I recalled that the role of mentor is one that women religious have fulfilled in times past. Take, for example, the influence of Teresa of Avila on John of the Cross and the influence of Catherine of Siena on Pope Gregory XI. These women were mentors of note at a time in history when the role of women was even more subservient than it is at present. Foundresses of religious communities, through their spiritual writings and the formulation of a rule of life, have also acted as mentors to their early followers and as sources of inspiration for those women who, generations later, opted to follow in their footsteps.

In less formal ways, too, women religious have acted as mentors. I can vividly recall my seventh-grade teacher, who took an interest in several of us and had us thinking of ourselves as "college material" at a time when education for all but a small percentage of women stopped at high school.

Today, there seems to be an even greater need for women religious to assume the role of mentor and

to exercise this role in such a way as to help foster the personal, professional, and spiritual growth of other women. By so doing, the woman religious has an opportunity to give concrete expression to the primary life task of adulthood that Erikson summarized under the concept of generativity. For Erikson, generativity was not to be conceived of as primarily a physical bringing to birth or rearing of children. His concept included a broader, intangible element. Thus the concept of mentoring, of a psychological "bringing to birth," of nurturing and fostering growth at the level of the intellectual, the spiritual, or the relational, is very much one that fits his idea of generativity.

Mentoring, like mercy, is twice blessed. It enriches the life of the woman who is sponsored and nurtured, while at the same time it adds a unique dimension to the identity of the woman religious who is the mentor. It allows her to share directly in the creative flow that fosters and develops the next generation of women and permits her to shape the future, not by the transmission of genetic material but by the transmission of ideas, ideals, traditions, and values.

WOMEN NEED MENTORS

Josselson's work points out that a woman's identity formation is much more heavily oriented toward the relational and interpersonal than is a

Despite the importance of a mentor, few women are fortunate enough to have one

man's. A woman must be able to anchor herself, to maintain communion and connectedness even while working on issues of separation and individuation. If a woman chooses to anchor herself in her family of origin or in her relationships with her husband and children, she is assured of the presence and support of significant others.

This is not true, however, of the woman—particularly the single woman—who attempts to anchor herself in her work or career. The necessary anchoring rarely takes place unless a person she deems important takes a personal interest in her career. A mentor thus provides not merely a practical route of entry into the field but, more important, a possibility of bonding with it in a personal way. Attachment to the mentor helps the woman to feel a part of the professional community and to take a place in it.

Those woman who lack a mentor, on the other hand, may continue to work but are often less invested in their careers and are not bonded to them in an identity-forming way. There is a need, then, for a model who can demonstrate how meaning in work might be created. Josselson notes that the presence of even one person who validates the meaningfulness of a woman's work can change an identity-distant job into an enriching and anchoring aspect of her existence.

Despite the importance of a mentor, few women are fortunate enough to have one. Although the number of women in the work force has increased dramatically since World War II, relatively few women in past years have risen to positions of prominence and influence. As a result, there has been a lack of role models for those women who are now, thanks to greater educational opportunities and affirmative action, in leadership positions. This

is particularly true for those who have entered professions that have traditionally been male-dominated. In the more traditional "female" professions such as teaching, nursing, and social work, it was much easier for an older, more experienced woman to assume the role of mentor to a younger woman. Now, however, as the next generation of women prepares to enter various avenues of the business and professional world, it is essential that some thought be given to providing them with mentors.

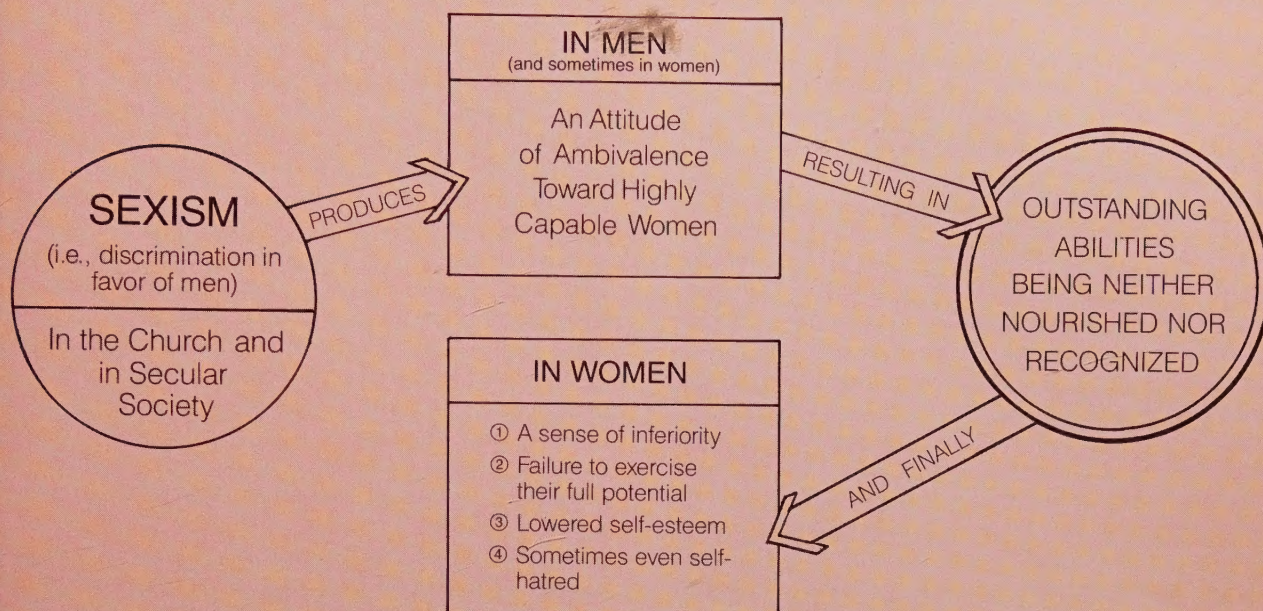
During the past twenty years, women religious have entered into a number of diverse ministries. No longer limited to the traditional "female" occupations that generally formed the core of a community's apostolic mission, sisters can now be found in many areas, including business and law. In addition to performing the actual job for which they have been hired, they are in a position to take up the role of mentor.

SOCIETY PRODUCES AMBIVALENCE

If women religious are to be mentors and to encourage the development of other women, it is necessary that they themselves be aware of the sociocultural forces that work against women. Sexism has produced an attitude of ambivalence toward highly capable women. This is true in the church as well as in secular society. This ambivalence takes its toll on both society at large and the individuals themselves when their outstanding abilities are neither nurtured nor recognized. Various research reports indicate that at the elementary-school level, at least half the children identified as "gifted and talented" are girls, yet at the junior-high-school level, fewer than one fourth of those so identified are female. The attrition rate continues with increasing age, so that by adulthood a majority of gifted women will very likely settle for less than the exercise of their full potential. Society's ambivalent attitude toward the gifted and capable woman is all too frequently internalized and results in a deeply ingrained sense of inferiority and even self-hatred.

Dr. Douglas LaBier, speaking at a conference on adult-child therapy, addressed the issue of how the culture abuses the child and how the effects of this abuse are operative in later life, particularly in the lives of adult career women who outwardly appear successful and well adjusted yet who suffer from anxiety and depression much of the time. Doctor LaBier noted that our society sets up a conflict for women, in that the qualities rewarded in establishing feminine identification are not those needed for corporate success. The oedipal conflict resolution is culturally supported and permits males to match or exceed the father, whereas females must absorb a limited view of women or, alternatively, identify themselves with the male and join in a struggle for

SOCIOCULTURAL FORCES DAMAGING WOMEN



power, domination, and control. In the working world, women are often excluded from vital work experiences that would allow them to climb the career ladder. In addition, they are excluded from the networks in which information, and hence power, are exchanged informally, and are thus at a disadvantage when they encounter the formal power structure of an organization.

The conflict between the culturally endorsed "feminine" qualities and those needed for corporate success is sometimes expressed in the impostor syndrome. Although very successful, the woman caught in this conflict feels that she is a fraud and waits with mounting anxiety for the moment when the truth will be revealed and her fraudulent activity discovered. Other women caught in this conflict experience depression, anxiety, exaggerated dependency, overeating, and alcoholism. These women have a strong need to be nurtured but lack a warm, supportive model in the world of work.

ROLE FOR RELIGIOUS WOMEN

Although it cannot be denied that the Catholic church is male-dominated, women religious have a unique opportunity to address and redress some of the problems brought about by sexism. Since, for the most part, they live in a single-sex organizational structure, it is possible for religious to identify and nurture the gifts of the community members in an atmosphere that is relatively free of male

domination. Although they are products of a society that has conditioned all women, to some extent, to see themselves as less capable than men, to be passive, to avoid risks, and to hold lower expectations for themselves and thus discount their own accomplishments, women religious living together in a celibate community life-style can assist each other in reversing the social trend without fearing they will be rejected or considered unfeminine. In turn, religious nurtured in such an environment can teach other women to recognize, accept, and develop their own giftedness. By offering themselves as mentors and their communities as encouraging environments, women religious can foster an atmosphere conducive to the growth and development of a network of support for gifted women from many walks of life.

Through their nurturing presence and example, women religious can assist other gifted women to develop autonomy and independence, a positive self-image, self-confidence, and a sense of social competence. They can assist women to recognize, value, and accept their creativity and to undo the fear of creative abilities that often builds upon experiences of rejection by teachers, parents, and peers. Even the unrest and dissatisfaction felt by a number of women religious regarding their status in the church can be useful. From their own painfully lived experiences, these women can help others to learn to contend with opposition and to cope with conflict while working against the systematic

devaluation of their abilities that is found throughout the whole of society—in the education system, the business world, and the church itself.

EXPAND THE CONCEPT OF GIFTEDNESS

The woman religious can also make use of her role as mentor to expand the notion of giftedness. Our society tends to recognize and reward only those gifts, talents, and abilities that are marketable. Gifts that do not lead to direct financial reward or that are not technologically oriented are too often dismissed as unworthy of consideration. As a result, so-called feminine gifts such as the abilities to love, to empathize, to nurture, to cope, and to survive are discounted and unappreciated.

Yet failure to recognize these gifts and their true worth perpetuates a masculine and constricted conception of giftedness. As Josselson points out, communion is central to female development. As a result, those qualities that foster attachment, connectedness, and relationship must be valued at least as highly as those that relate to agency and agentic need. (Bakan classifies under "agency" self-assertion, mastery, individual distinction, and separateness; "communion" includes contact, union, cooperation, and being together.) A less material, more spiritual perspective on the concepts of gift and giftedness would certainly help build self-esteem in women—and not merely in those who hold professional positions. The woman religious who recognizes and affirms the gift for which there is no market value supports countless women who would otherwise see themselves as ordinary, dull, mundane, or lacking in skills.

Some of the women so affirmed may be mothers and homemakers who feel left out and unvalued, not only by "masculine" society but also by the women's movement, which stresses achievement and equality in the workplace. These mothers and homemakers need to be nurtured, appreciated, and affirmed, lest they transmit to their children the negative messages born of low self-esteem and devaluation and thus perpetuate the problem for another generation of women. Indeed, one problem that has been noted by Marianne Walters, a family therapist, is the tendency of young women to devalue the choices their own mothers made. These women thus perpetuate a system wherein success is seen as a male prerogative, for they fail to recognize often enough that the presence of a nurturing mother and the efforts of other women created the opportunities they now have.

AFFIRMATION FOR OLDER WOMEN

Other women in need of affirmation are the middle-aged and elderly. Society as a whole is particularly harsh to these women, who are past their physical prime or are no longer part of the

work force. Thus, we see younger women hired for their physical attractiveness for jobs that place them in the public eye, only to be shunted into the background as they get older. In other instances, we see competent middle-aged women left to stagnate in dead-end jobs as they bump into the "glass ceiling" of the corporate world.

Certainly, women religious can offer support and encouragement to middle-aged women who must struggle with the fixation our society has on youth, an attitude that tends to prevent their full maturation into the second half of life. By sponsoring discussion groups and retreats that focus on the special needs of the middle-aged woman, religious can help expose the social myths that treat these women as if they were debilitated, useless, second-class individuals. Communities of women religious have rich resources in terms of members who possess expertise in the fields of education, mental health, and medical care. Surely these resource persons could provide middle-aged women with practical, accurate information regarding menopause and the physical changes brought on by aging and could offer assistance in dealing with the psychological components of these problems as well. Elissa Melamed, in her book *Mirror Mirror*, notes the problems of "appearance anxiety," a phenomenon equivalent to the "performance anxiety" of the male, and "neutering," the stripping away of sexuality as a woman ages. These problems need to be discussed openly and in a supportive atmosphere.

The problems encountered by women increase with age, particularly when they leave the work force. The "useless" image fostered by society creates a vicious circle as the elderly woman so defined begins to act more "elderly," more "debilitated," and more "useless." Yet this time of life can be a fruitful and productive one if women are taught to recognize and nurture their gifts. Some may have developed gifts of insight and compassion in the course of their life experience that they can share with the young by assuming the role of foster grandparents or volunteer counselors in bereavement groups. Others, freed from the need to organize a large household or office staff, may wish to redirect their administrative gifts to various church or civic organizations. Still others may embody a spirit of faith and hope in the midst of suffering that can serve to inspire those with whom they come in contact. The gifts are sure to be there; what is needed are eyes that see and ears that hear—and a value system that can appreciate and support the gifts of the heart that allow us to live life with integrity, gracefulness, and authenticity.

RELIGION A TWO-EDGED SWORD

There is another reason why it is more necessary than ever that women religious take seriously their

role as mentors. Women's identities are not determined so much by political and occupational issues, as is the case with men, as by social and religious issues. The importance of religion is at this point a two-edged sword. I have pointed out ways in which women religious can act to bring to awareness and nurture the giftedness of other women. A national survey revealed that religious devoutness was consistently the strongest determinant of values, attitudes, and behavior with regard to home, community, and work activities and social and political issues. Yet current research also shows that in many instances, as religious devoutness increases, gender-role attitudes become more traditional and conservative with reference to the woman's role in the family and the workplace, to the maintenance of more rigid sex-role stereotypes, and to limits on social change in this area. As self-esteem and assertiveness are increased and as working role models are made more available, more openness to nontraditional roles for women is engendered. Clearly, the need is there for a mentor who can balance and integrate religious practice and devotion with assertiveness and a high level of self-esteem, if ever women are to come to an appreciation of their giftedness and make use of their gifts in ways that enhance themselves and those with whom they interact as they go through life.

SEXISM COUNTERACTED

Given the fact that the culture itself contributes to the oppression of women, what can the woman religious do to help counteract such a pervasive, negative influence? First, she should have an awareness of and sensitivity to these cultural forces and attempt to help others, both men and women, to recognize their negative impact. Second, she might assist in establishing networks for women that would enable them to have the wider access to information and experience that is needed to scale various career ladders.

A third strategy that might prove useful would be developing within herself and then within others a comfortableness with a sort of "androgeny," that is, the state of having a combination of the traits and behaviors that have traditionally been assigned in a stereotyped, differential fashion to males and females. For example, traits of mastery and independence are traditionally seen as "masculine," whereas docility and dependence have traditionally been labeled "feminine." Although traits of this sort are not necessarily involved in actual sexual behavior, they are included in people's stereotyped notions of how males and females differ. If women are to continue to progress and not sit back as second-class citizens in the church or in society, it is necessary that the old sex-role stereotyping be transcended and a more adaptive and integrated role be modeled. This requires not an exchange of traditional feminine traits,

such as warmth and compassion, for masculine traits, such as assertiveness and dominance, but a combination and integration of the best features of each. The woman religious needs to be, and to present to others, a role model who is compassionate yet has business acumen, is considerate of the needs of others yet assertive, is nurturing yet decisive and task-oriented.

To cast this concept in Jungian terms, the woman who wishes to act as a mentor who can foster the development of other women along non-traditional lines must herself "make friends" with her animus, the masculine aspect of her own personality. It is vital that the woman religious not be overpowered or dominated by her animus but that she lead the way in showing women that an integration can be achieved wherein a balance is established between "masculine" focused consciousness and "feminine" diffuse awareness and relatedness. It is of no help to anyone to have women who are "pseudo-men," women who have lost contact with the relational aspect of themselves. Such women are out of touch with their real selves and with their own basic truths. The woman religious must be very much in touch with her deepest self if she is to be able to mediate the relational and spiritual side of life and foster its growth in others. Only then will she be in a position to give witness to the coming of the Kingdom in which there will be "neither male nor female" and participate in the establishment of a new creation.

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FORMATION OF PRIESTS

1990 Synod in Rome Presents a Challenge

Vincent Dwyer, o.c.s.o.

Pope John Paul II recently announced that the next synod, to be held in 1990, will focus on one of the most critical issues facing the Church—the formation of priests. This issue has not been addressed in any comprehensive way since Vatican Council II. There is a need to create a dialogue that will foster and promote fruitful outcomes of both the preparations for the synod and the synod itself. This article is an attempt to stimulate that dialogue and to encourage others to share their reflections.

There are many ways to begin, but perhaps we can learn much from the present interest of the business world in the need for “vision.” Today executives are asked to state their own visions and to create an environment in which employees may articulate theirs. Vision, seen as the key to ownership and responsibility, has in turn affected morale, productivity, efficiency, and the bottom line—profits!

In the Book of Proverbs we find the bold statement, “Where there is no vision, people die” (Prov 29:18). In the context of our concern about the formation of priests, we might gain many insights by rephrasing that statement as follows: “Where there is no vision of priesthood, priests die.” This is a shocking statement, but one that I believe comes close to reality. It offers us a way of looking at the current problems articulated in the document

“Reflections on the Morale of Priests,” issued recently by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops. Moreover, any serious consideration of priestly formation without a clear vision of priesthood is absurd.

VISION REQUIRES CLARITY

For the past seventeen years The Center for Human Development has been responding to the needs of priests in and through our Ministry to Priests Program. Our program has touched the lives of over 40,000 priests throughout the English-speaking world. It is from this experience that I feel compelled to speak out in relation to recent articles and press releases about the morale of priests and to focus the dialogue on the crucial question of priestly formation.

Since Vatican II many priests have found that their vision—their dream of priesthood—and their understanding of the role of the priest are no longer clear. Emerging new ministries, ever-changing demands, personnel boards, retirement policies, and many other factors have left far too many unsure about their role. This vacuum has created many problems, and some fear that in our attempt to address these problems, we miss the real issues. The Book of Proverbs provides us with a starting point: “Where there is no vision, people die.” With-

out a clear vision of the priesthood and a clarification of the role of the priest in the modern world, the church will continue to face not only problems but also a shortage of priests.

I have yet to meet a priest who, in responding to Christ's call, started out on his journey without a vision, a dream. For many the dream becomes clouded, if not lost, as they respond to the day-to-day demands of the ministry. Their vision is the very heart of their vocation, and when that vision is clouded or lost, the vocation becomes a job.

Vocation can be described as the road created by our vision. It calls us to a radical commitment and a conscious willingness to pay the price of our dream, even though we may never see the results. The vision gives us not only the road on which we choose to walk but also a radiant beacon that guides us.

A vocation embraces our dream, our vision; it is a way of life we have freely chosen to express our deepest selves; it gives meaning. On the other hand, a job is something we do that may or may not give meaning; it is viewed as something we have to do. The work that flows from one's vision is life-giving. Often one must try various jobs in order to find the meaning for which one is searching. Jobs are temporary; a vocation is permanent. Permanence and commitment are counter to today's culture; people move from job to job and fear making a commitment of their whole being. But only through the discovery of our vocation and commitment do we find true meaning, fulfillment, and inner peace. Priesthood and marriage are examples of vocations; they are not jobs.

Every vocation embraces a vision, a dream that compels us to take a stand. It involves risk and the ability to let go of our various attachments. It opens us to the dynamic unfolding challenge, excitement, energy, and fulfillment offered in and through our personal vision. To keep that vision alive, the church has always encouraged priests to seek solitude and silence through retreats, days of recollection, and a consistent life of prayer. Without fidelity to these and other traditional exercises of the spiritual life, we run the risk of losing our inner peace and strength. The danger lies in becoming too absorbed in the work front. Unless we step back and spend time with the Lord, allowing the Holy Spirit to rekindle our dream, we risk losing the vocation; it assumes the qualities of a job.

VOCATION BECOMES JOB

When my priesthood becomes a job rather than the expression of my vision, I open myself to dissatisfaction, stress, and even burnout. The energy and power I once possessed give way to doubts, loneliness, and a feeling of emptiness and utter frustration. I begin to think, "It's not what I thought it would be; there is no joy in my work, no

Any serious consideration of priestly formation without a clear vision of priesthood is absurd

fulfillment. I guess I never had a vocation to the priesthood." Such feelings may surface during our journey; more often than not, they are signs that we are losing our vision, not our vocation. The priesthood is a vocation, and it is all about dreams and vision. The priest without a vision is moving from a vocation to a job.

Our vision clarifies how we want to minister to the people of God and to one another. In creating and sharing our vision, we also create requirements—demands on ourselves—for which we become responsible and accountable. Since the vision is ours, we cannot blame someone else. Our vision is about the future. It comes from the heart, the inner self, not from the head. A vision clarifies the type of church we wish to create, knowing all along that we may never see it, but it gives direction rather than pinpointing our specific destination. A vision may be said to be radical in that it embraces our deepest desires and enables us to take a unique stand. It empowers and gives meaning even where there seems to be none.

I believe that every priest would acknowledge that he had a dream in the beginning. Moreover, the dream embraced the desire to become holy and to touch the whole world, to foster the fullness of the life of Christ in others. Likewise, I believe that every priest experiences the pain of weakness and sinfulness to the point of feeling discouraged at times, if not willing to settle for less than the original vision. Our mystical tradition tells us that at this very point, the devil and the forces of evil join to tempt us to give up our dream—to settle for

Every vocation embraces a vision, a dream that compels us to take a stand

less or to quit. Too few priests are familiar with the teachings of the mystics to understand that like St. Paul, they have discovered that there is power in their weakness. Our struggles to become holy are the work of a lifetime. It is only when we quit that we cast away our power to live out our dreams. We then experience real loss, both temporary and permanent.

THE CHALLENGE OF FORMATION

In recent years both Rome and the National Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB) have issued many documents in an attempt to address the needs of priests. There are two that represent turning points to many priests: "Continuing Education of Priests" and "The Spiritual Renewal of the American Priesthood," both issued by the NCCB in 1972. These documents were beacons, sources of hope and encouragement; they were positive and gave direction. But they have yet, in my estimation, to be implemented. We must once again face the true challenge of spiritual renewal and formation—consider where we are and where we want to be.

In confronting the critical challenge of the formation of priests, we must first focus our energies on establishing a clear vision of the priesthood and clarifying the role of the priest in the modern world in the light of Vatican II. The successful completion of this task will establish the foundation for a comprehensive plan of formation.

Many, if not all, of the problems we face today can be traced to a lack of a comprehensive formation program—a program grounded in a vision and

a clear understanding of the role of the priest. Those involved in formation since Vatican II have made an effort to face the challenge in an environment that has lacked these fundamentals. It is also true that we have not developed a comprehensive plan for lifelong priestly formation. We must find constructive ways to address these issues.

If we look at formation as a lifelong process, we can identify four specific stages of formation: the call to priesthood (vocation), training (seminary), internship (the first three to five years after ordination), and lifelong formation. These stages should be functionally connected and interrelated, but at the present time they are hardly such. As we look at each of them, we must raise questions that will point to the serious need for research and a wide consultative process in order to clarify, and to achieve ownership of, the priestly role.

THE CALL TO PRIESTHOOD

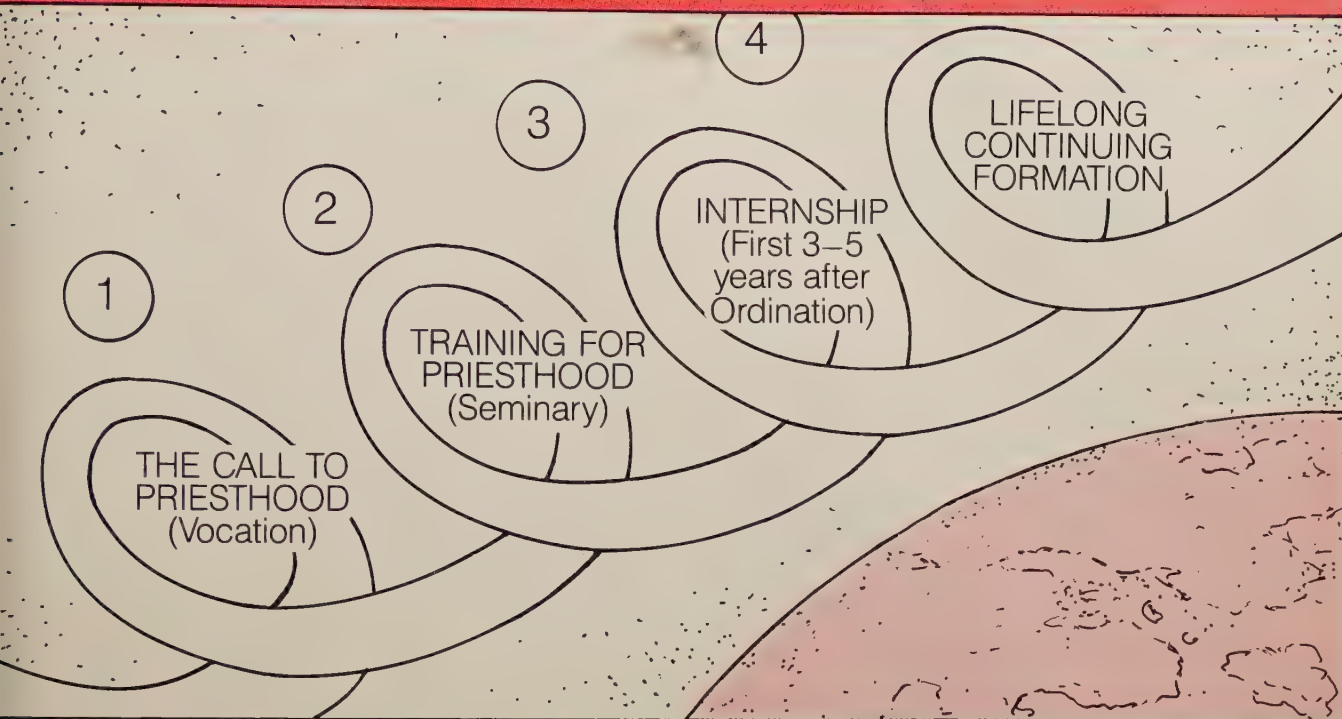
The first stage deals with the initial call to priesthood. What is the responsibility of a vocational director in this phase of formation? Is it solely to recruit, or is this the area in which we must not only create opportunities for young people to hear the call of Christ but also help them to learn about the spiritual life? Without an introduction to the spiritual exercises and a way of discerning the action of the Holy Spirit, how can the candidate move on to the next phase? In which stage does the initial formation indeed take place? If in this stage, then what should be the goals and objectives? If not in this stage, then when? How can the seminary be sure that the spiritual foundation on which they must build is in place?

St. Teresa of Avila maintains that the spiritual life is unique, never duplicated. We must accept the fact that every seminary is also unique; there is thus a need to make a proper selection for each candidate. Is the vocational director responsible for identifying the unique characteristics of seminaries? Is it reasonable to suggest that young candidates would have been in spiritual direction and following the spiritual exercises for some time before considering entrance to the seminary? Additional questions could be raised in regard to this phase of formation, but the above should be sufficient to promote an exchange of ideas.

FORMATION IN SEMINARY

The second stage is training, which takes place in the structure known as the seminary. Of all the stages, this one has had to endure the most criticism; spiritual formators are often blamed for things for which they alone could not possibly be responsible. For too long the church has assumed that the seminary should accomplish everything, from educating in theology and the sacred sciences

FORMATION IS A LIFELONG PROCESS



to producing outstanding public speakers, counselors, educators, managers, spiritual leaders, men of prayer . . . an impossible task! If we were to affirm that formation is lifelong and that there are phases with particular tasks and responsibilities, then what would be the specific focus of the seminary? Many of the problems we face today are due to demands on seminaries to accomplish too much in too short a time and without any cohesive relation to the other stages. It is a miracle that they have retained any semblance of sanity. This phase of formation must be reassessed when the church articulates a clear vision of priesthood and the role of the priest in the modern world. We can hope that the synod will address this critical issue and the need for a comprehensive plan for the lifelong formation of priests. Otherwise, it seems that the seminaries will continue to attempt an impossible task. There is little doubt that solid philosophical and theological education is needed to create a sound basis for ministerial training and theological reflection on experiences within the ministry. What should be the focus and responsibilities of this phase in relation to the others?

INTERNSHIP AFTER ORDINATION

Documents from Rome and the National Confer-

ence of Catholic Bishops state that there must be a program for the newly ordained. This phase would constitute the third stage and be called internship. Far too many young priests suffer and become disillusioned during this period because of the lack of a clarity of goals and objectives in this phase of formation. More often than not, newly ordained priest are assigned to parishes to fill vacancies. If this phase is an internship, then parish staffs must be trained to help the newly ordained in an environment that will foster their growth and commitment. There is also a need for each diocese to provide a structure that will enable the new priest to reflect on his experiences in the light of the gospel and the sacred sciences. Seminars and support systems must be available. It is evident that if this period of formation is an internship, then it requires trained mentors, a sound program, and clearly defined goals and objectives. Perhaps the most difficult challenge we face in this phase is the resolution of the question, Is the priest called to become a pastor? If the response is affirmative, then it becomes necessary to provide the young priest with placements in several different parish settings in order to determine the type of parish in which he would function well in serving the people of God. Few dioceses have addressed this area of formation, and far too many young priests have

There is a value in the permanence of the relationship between the pastor and the people of the parish

had their dreams crushed in the early years of priesthood. Can we continue the status quo?

LIFELONG CONTINUING FORMATION

The fourth stage is lifelong formation. Once again, the documents state that there is a right and an obligation for every priest to continue his formation, based on the rights of the people of God. Furthermore, the documents place a heavy responsibility on bishops to ensure that this is a reality. However, we must recognize that we are not always self-motivated and that until we introduce some basic expectations, requirements, evaluation, and accountability, far too little will take place in this phase of formation. The document "Continuing Education" states that spiritual formation must be holistic. Hence it is imperative that we provide support for priests in ways that address their intellectual, physical, emotional, and ministerial needs. One-to-one ministry (spiritual direction), support groups, and diocesan programs that respond to real needs are essential. Without serious reflection on the goals and objectives of this lifelong formation stage, along with the establishment of minimum requirements and accountability for this phase, the church will fail both its priests and the laity.

In looking at the formation of priests in terms of stages, it becomes obvious that they are parts of a whole. They must be interrelated and dependent on one another if we are to have a cohesive plan of formation. Until the church articulates its vision of priesthood and clarifies the role of the priest in the light of Vatican II, we will not be able to address the challenge of priestly formation. If the universal church becomes involved in helping the synod to

state clearly the vision and role of the priest in the modern world, then the difficult task of bringing unity and interrelatedness to all the phases of priestly formation will be more easily achieved.

SPIRITUALITY AND PERMANENCE

We face several other serious challenges that relate to the above tasks and need to be addressed. The first is the need to reintroduce spirituality as the core of the formation curriculum in every phase and to recognize that ascetical and mystical theology is a valid branch of the sacred sciences that needs to be mastered. For too long this branch of theology has not been considered to be central to the curriculum; it has been relegated to electives, spiritual conferences, and some survey courses, which ill prepare the priest for his own journey and the ever increasing demands made of him by the laity, who need a spiritual leader and guide. It seems impossible that any articulated vision of the priesthood would not include in the role of the priest the need to be a spiritual leader. If this need does exist, we must accept the responsibility of training the priest to fill it.

Finally, we must address the question, Is there any permanence in the relation of pastor, shepherd, and the people within a parish? In the seventeenth century, Cardinal Bellarmine raised the question of the permanence of the relationship between bishops and their dioceses. In the past there were many abuses—cases in which pastors remained in their positions forever, with great harm to all. There has also been serious negligence in terms of failing to intervene and address problems. We have tended to move "the problem" from one parish to another, and everyone involved has suffered. How do we get rid of a bad pastor? One solution has been to develop a policy of transferring every pastor after a period of time in a given parish. This has not only solved the problem of the bad pastor but has also provided the priest with new challenges.

The problem with the current policies of new terms for pastors is that we have not recognized that the diocesan priest is nurtured in and through the people he is called to serve and that bonding is essential. Being a part of the community and of families are necessary elements of a sound spirituality for the diocesan priest. Present personnel policies make bonding most difficult. A whole generation has grown up in the church without having established a relationship with a priest. I am told that young people preparing for marriage often ask the priest, "Will you still be here, Father, for our wedding?" The lack of permanence allows both pastors and the people to "wait out" the term rather than work through problems of relationships. There is excitement in moving on to a new challenge, new people; however, we must also realize the down side of this policy. After several

term assignments, priests are asking the question, "Can I start over again?" There can be little doubt that fulfillment in the diocesan priesthood requires an immersion in the community. It is sad when this bonding fails to happen.

I raise the question of permanence because I believe we need to review our present personnel policies in the light of our tradition and theology. Down through the ages, from the time of Christ, the very terms *pastor* and *shepherd* have acquired a depth of richness; they embrace knowing, being known, and bonding. Priests and pastors must change because of the needs of a diocese, but can we promote temporary relationships without paying a price? If we recognize permanence as a value, we must also pay a price. For instance, it would be necessary to establish clear and fair ways to evaluate a pastor, based on a mutually agreed-on five-year parish plan. It is a serious question, and I believe that we can find solutions if we agree that there is a value in the permanence of the relationship between the pastor and the people of the parish.

I have spent the last seventeen years working

with priests, and it has been most rewarding. They are great men, and it is my sincere hope and prayer that everyone will participate in assisting Pope John Paul II to make this synod a success. The pope has identified one of the most serious challenges that the church faces today, the formation of priests. I am convinced that with a sound, comprehensive plan of lifelong priestly formation that constructively responds to the question raised, we will affirm all priests.

To return to my rephrasing of Proverbs: "Where there is no vision of priesthood, priests die."



Father Vincent Dwyer, o.c.s.o., founder of The Center for Human Development, established the Ministry to Priests Program for the spiritual renewal of priests in the United States, Canada, England, and Australia. His book *Lift Your Sails* won the 1988 HUMAN DEVELOPMENT Book-of-the-Year Award.

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In response to many requests from individuals and book stores, the Jesuit Educational Center for Human Development has decided to offer again some of the books we have published and reprinted. We will also be publishing additional books in the near future, including *The Ministry of Spiritual Direction*, by Madeline Birmingham, r.c., and William J. Connolly, S.J.

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The Marginalization of Social Scientists Within the Church

Gerald A. Arbuckle, S.M., Ph.D.

Church authorities assert that the social sciences are needed to assist in evangelization. In practice, however, many social scientists who wish to use their talents directly in the service of evangelization feel at times that they are marginalized (i.e., pushed to the edge of society, with diminished importance and influence). They feel unwanted by evangelizers at all levels of the church. This article explains why and how this marginalization occurs. It also suggests ways in which social scientists who work for church agencies can cope with marginalization.

By the expression "social sciences," I primarily mean sociology and cultural anthropology. My reflections are personal. They are based on twenty-five years of experience in conducting sociological surveys and anthropological studies in the service of local churches and religious congregations.

CONTINUED OFFICIAL SUPPORT

In the documents of Vatican II, the social sciences are acknowledged as essential aids in evangelization. Christians must know the dramatically changing world they are to evangelize. Common sense alone cannot grasp the complexity of culture or of change. So the social sciences must be used as instruments to assist evangelizers, both to under-

stand the world and to discover how best to preach the gospel message (*Gaudium et Spes*, 62).

Official ecclesiastical statements in support of the pastoral services of social scientists continue. For example, in 1971 Paul VI praised the usefulness of sociological surveys "for better discovering the thought patterns of the people of a particular place, the anxieties and needs of those to whom we proclaim the word of God." He said that "questions [posed by such surveys] are so many invitations to us to proclaim better, in its incarnate transcendence, the Good News of Christ the Savior" (*L'Osservatore romano*, 5 January 1971). John Paul II has said that "the theology of our time needs the help not only of philosophy, but . . . especially of the human sciences, as an inseparable basis for a response to the question, 'what is man?'" (*L'Osservatore romano*, 20 December 1982).

DISCIPLINES STILL UNDERVALUED

The dramatic change in official theological thinking about the evangelical potential of the social sciences, initiated by Vatican II, at first brought joy to many a professional social scientist. At the beginning of Vatican II, theologian Edward Schillebeeckx wrote enthusiastically that "One might say that the integration of sociology into Catholic

thought is today a fact, even though in some Catholic circles, not all reserve and suspicion have been overcome . . . The eager eyes of the church now look to this new science, because she is fully aware that every partial truth contributes to the total truth. . . ."

Schillebeeckx was far too optimistic. The social sciences are still accorded a very low priority by the church—in parish, diocesan, and congregational planning, and among theologians and liturgists.

Theologians and liturgists continue to express, with remarkable self-confidence, views on how cultures are to be evangelized. Rarely do they seek the advice of anthropologists, whose specialized field of study is culture. Yet culture is most certainly a perplexing phenomenon—ubiquitous in presence, complex in detail, overwhelming and incomprehensible in its totality and intricacy. Any effort to grasp it through simplistic analysis is therefore doomed to failure.

Throughout the world, there are very few adequately trained cultural anthropologists or sociologists whose full-time task is to provide pastoral research material for local churches or religious congregations. This illustrates the overall lack of interest in, and sometimes even hostility toward, what their disciplines offer to evangelizers today.

REASONS FOR MARGINALIZATION

The following are some of the more significant factors that may foster the neutralization of the social scientist's evangelical influence within today's church.

Denial of Crises. The task of social scientists is to portray reality as it is, not as people would like it to be. Some aspects of reality—such as the ongoing, dramatic drop in vocations to the priesthood and religious life and the dropoff in the conversion rate—are very disturbing to church administrators. The very human reaction is to deny or avoid anxiety-provoking situations.

Some initial denial can normally be expected. The real problem occurs when this denial becomes chronic. Andrew Greeley complained recently about the reluctance of ecclesiastical authorities to acknowledge the statistical evidence of the church's severe loss of middle-class Hispanic Catholics in the United States to fundamentalist Protestant sects: "Church leaders seem to believe that if they deny truth to one another . . . then it stops being truth. All that such denials do in fact mean is that they are hiding from the truth" (*America*, 30 July 1988, p. 62). I have had similar experiences when presenting statistical evidence of uncomfortable truths to religious and ecclesiastical clients.

Of course, denial can affect not just superiors but also whole groups of people—for example, religious congregations. The tacit agreement of members in any group not to notice or openly acknowledge

some troubling truth has been termed "group-think." It can plague organizations both large and small. For example, thoroughly prepared surveys can clearly indicate that a particular religious province is dying, yet its members refuse to accept the truth. They continue their work as though nothing is wrong. We call this denial functional blindness: the religious look at the statistics of rapid decline but see only growth.

"Restoration" Fundamentalism. At times, people may attempt to cope with chaos by withdrawal into an unreal spiritual world. Or they may dream nostalgically of a return to a bygone age of power and glory.

Both forms of denial are evident in the church today. We are surely experiencing a dark period of uncertainty about how to evangelize a world that is less and less interested in what the church has to teach. We evangelizers feel disoriented, directionless. Some of us turn to a spirituality that comfortably shuts out the world. Others opt for a new form of fundamentalism: the attempt to restore without change the symbols and rituals of a pre-Vatican II church.

Both types of evangelizers see social scientists as dangerous compromisers with the world, as modernists. "All we need," they proclaim, "is more faith, more prayer, and the Lord will see us through!"

False Expectations. Sometimes administrators lack the technological knowledge to read the reports of social scientists. They may even wrongly expect sociologists to provide them with detailed guidelines on what to do in pastoral situations. Normally, the task of the social scientist is to describe reality; it is then the task of administrators to make decisions for action on the basis of this information. When only information is provided, not action-oriented guidelines, administrators tend to condemn the analysis as a waste of time.

Negative Press. In the years immediately following Vatican II, there was a brief burst of interest in the sociological survey. But people became weary, even cynical, of yet another questionnaire—especially when administrators did not know what to do with the collated material. W.H. Auden aptly expressed this cynicism in *Under Which Lyre*:

Thou shalt not answer questionnaires . . .
nor with compliance
Take any test. Thou shalt not sit
with statisticians nor commit
a Social Science.

MARGINALIZING THE PROFESSIONAL

Clients who fear "uncomfortable" information provided by social researchers may seek to keep the

offending researchers at a safe distance or to neutralize the information in various ways.

Generally, there is first the personal attack. I once received this written comment on a questionnaire I sent to members of a religious congregation: "Who do you think you are? Stop wasting our time. There is nothing wrong with our province, until some fool like you comes around and tells us otherwise!"

If the personal attack does not succeed, there is the assault on one's professional competence. On one occasion I presented to a particular community the findings of a detailed survey. One religious, in reaction to the critical evaluation of various apostolates, articulated the general response of the community: "I cannot accept your conclusions. The way you phrased the questions shows professional incompetence." (Neither he nor any other member of the community was trained in the social sciences).

Then there are the nine (subtle or not-so-subtle) basic ways in which the reports of social scientists are treated by clients who wish to deny or avoid awkward pastoral or congregational truths:

Straight rejection: "Your report has been received, but it has been decided that the time is not right to act on its conclusions."

The bottom-drawer method: "We are most grateful for your fine report, and we expect to act on it in due course." Nothing is done.

The pass-the-buck method: "Thank you. We are submitting your report to a subcommittee for their comments." Nothing is done.

The silent treatment: The report is formally received, with no comments. Nothing is heard of it again.

The more-information approach: "Thank you. We would appreciate more information on various points." This approach is repeated several times in the hope that the researcher will tire and the report can quietly be laid to rest.

"Minoritis": "There are some minor inaccuracies in your report that really have us worried. Kindly explain." The hope is to discredit the entire report on the basis of minor inaccuracies. The major conclusions are not questioned, but they are quietly ignored.

The scapegoating approach: "This is a fine report, but the diocese is just not ready for it yet. It will only cause unnecessary divisions. So we have decided to make the report confidential and delay further consideration of its conclusions until a more opportune time." The report is effectively shelved.

Spiritual escapism: "God is never tied down by the findings of surveys. You can never reduce religious life to a statistic!"

The spiritual-manipulation approach: "How could you possibly write such harsh things about your

congregation (or diocese)? Your criticism shows that you lack charity and compassion."

SELF-MARGINALIZATION

Social scientists themselves can neutralize the effectiveness of their research through their own lack of professionalism. They can do this in a number of ways.

Like all professionals, the social scientist can use so much jargon that communication is impossible or is made unnecessarily difficult. Clients swamped with more and more reports that they simply do not know how to read may be overwhelmed by all the information.

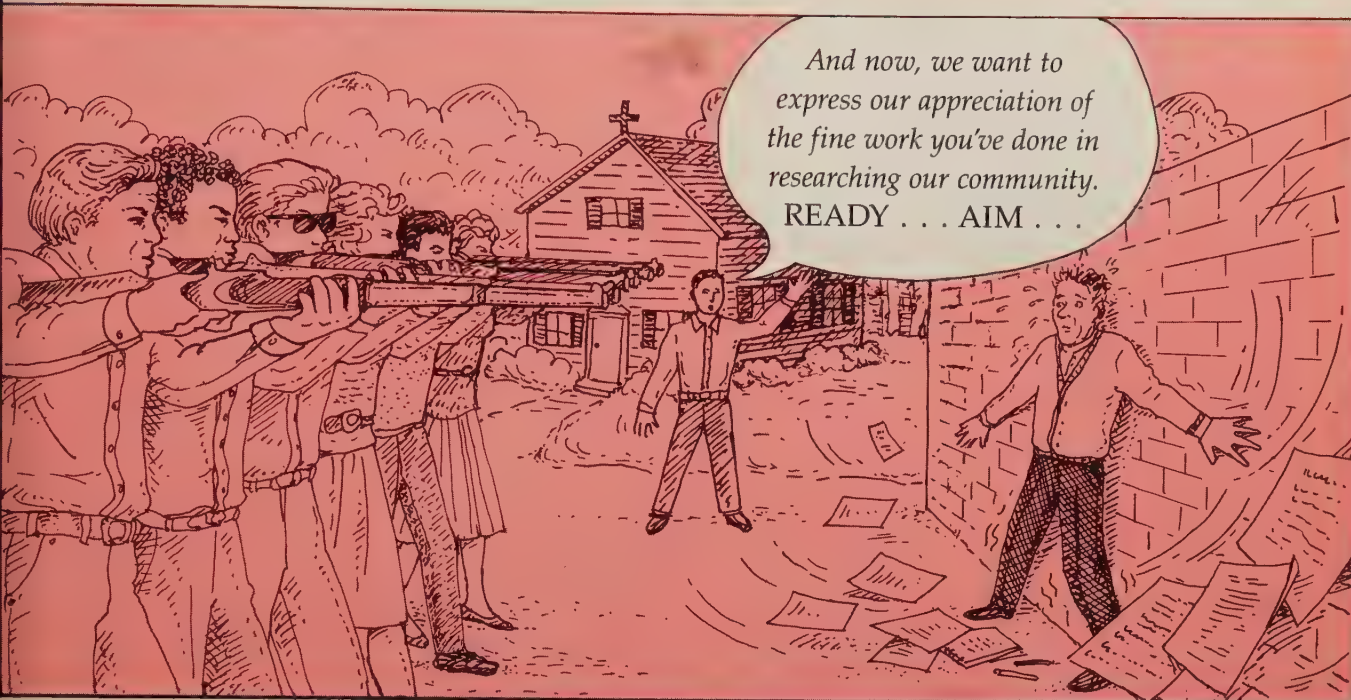
The researcher may lack the patience necessary to allow people to ponder the meaning and implications of sociological information. Impatience can breed snobbish intolerance; the researcher may develop an inflated sense of his or her own importance. Clients may be subtly made to feel stupid if they do not accept a report's findings quickly. Under such pressure, clients understandably become suspicious about the objectivity and accuracy of the report.

Marginalization can also occur when the social scientist exceeds the mandate given her or him. The researcher's task may be to suggest options for action in light of the material gathered. But he or she does not decide which option is to be taken: that right and obligation belongs to the people with decision-making authority. If the researcher acts as a lobbyist in an effort to guarantee the acceptance of the sociological material or of particular recommendations, then he or she should be aware that the roles are being changed. As a consequence, people may rightly react against the lobbying tactics and reject the material.

Clients may be totally unaware that there are various kinds of social scientists—that some have skills primarily as researchers, whereas others are trained not just to research but also to monitor, and even to lead, the change process. If social scientists fail to acquaint their clients with their specialized skills, they can cause unnecessary confusion, and the clients may have unrealistic expectations. For example, a cultural anthropologist will adopt an approach quite different from that of a sociologist in analyzing pastoral problems. He or she will emphasize far more the participant-observant method; the sociologist, on the other hand, will concentrate on questionnaires.

All social scientists have particular biases or values about the nature of society and how social change takes place. For example, a social scientist who believes that change takes place only through conflict will make recommendations with this basic assumption in mind. A consensus social scientist, on the other hand, will favor dialogue and

ADMINISTRATORS SOMETIMES RESENT FINDINGS



consultation, not conflict, in advising how social change may be introduced.

Clients may be immensely confused, and justifiably angry, if social scientists reveal their biases only after the research is completed. If the researchers are marginalized because of their lack of openness, they have only themselves to blame.

SOURCES OF TENSION

The person who researches for ecclesiastical or congregational groups usually works alone. He or she may feel completely isolated when there is no other professional person or group with whom to discuss the project's progress.

I recall one of the first sociological surveys I conducted in a large religious province. I spent one morning just browsing through three hundred questionnaire responses. There, on one table, rested the hopes and frustrations of the individual religious of an entire province. Suddenly I felt overwhelmed and emotionally drained by the loneliness of the task, the enormity of the problems confronting the province, and the weight of the responsibility that now rested on my shoulders.

Sometimes when clients discover the failings of their apostolates set out clearly in sociological research reports, they turn their frustrations, even anger, directly and openly at the researcher. If the researcher is unaware of what is taking place, then

he or she is apt to take the attack personally; this adds to the strain of having to work alone.

At times there are pressures, from all kinds of sources, to manipulate the analysis of the research in favor of one group or another. There are those who, with the best of intentions, want to use a survey report to bolster their own particular view of how the work of a diocesan or congregational apostolate should be conducted—so they supply the researcher with “essential information.” Comments like this are made: “I am sure you will not get the right angle on the province. Here is the real situation.”

On rare occasions, the pressure to manipulate the researcher can be quite malicious, yet at the same time even hilarious. In the early 1970s, as I was preparing a major study of two religious provinces, I was approached by the head of the secret service of a colonial power within the South Pacific. “I am a good Catholic,” he said, “but there are priests in this country who want to do harm to the church and the government. If you supply me with information about several disloyal priests during your study, then be assured I will be able to help the local church.” He did not get the material he wanted!

When the researcher's findings are presented to the client, the researcher may have to cope with any of the forms of rejection described earlier. From experience, I think the silent treatment is the

The task of social scientists is to portray reality as it is, not as people would like it to be

most difficult to handle. After possibly months of detailed, exhausting work, generally performed under poor working conditions (to keep costs down), the researcher gets no response from the client except for a short letter acknowledging receipt of the report.

When one's research is ignored, one is apt to look for even the slightest sign that someone has read it. Sometimes, however, the signs may not indicate anything particularly positive. Once, on visiting a province some years after having made an in-depth study of it, I was told by one religious just how valuable the study was to him: "Those two volumes are of great help. They are heavy enough to keep the door open during strong winds." Another said, "Excellent reports. I use two on my chair so I can reach my typewriter." Funny? Yes; but for the weary researcher, these comments may just exacerbate the feeling of discouragement.

COPING WITH MARGINALIZATION

Accept the "Prophetic" Role. Social researchers must accept the fact that the social sciences are "prophetic" disciplines. And since prophetic people are never particularly popular in the secular or religious world, social scientists must be prepared for some form of marginalization.

Through scientific methods, social scientists are able, with unnerving clarity, to point out the gap between what people think or wish reality to be and what is actually the situation. Inevitably, people whose views are strongly challenged by the research are tempted to deny the truth of its conclusions.

For example, cultural anthropologists can disturb the complacency of theologians by pointing out just how culturally conditioned are all their formulations. Moreover, many people live by popular, or "folk," theologies and not by the systematized, academic conclusions of theologians.

It may be uncomfortable for liturgists to learn from anthropologists that the liturgical changes of Vatican II, although good in themselves, were often initiated too rapidly—and people at the grass roots had little or no involvement in how the changes were to occur. Long-held symbols cannot be discarded overnight as though they are inanimate pieces of machinery. People need time and space to interiorize the new and grieve over the loss of the old. If they don't, they will feel disoriented, confused, cut off from the past.

I sometimes find that religious are dismayed, even angry, when research reveals the gap between their rhetoric in provincial and general chapters or in mission statements on the one hand, and their dismal failure to implement their renewal rhetoric on the other hand. Brilliant rhetoric often bears little relationship to reality. One provincial councilor said to me, "We have advanced in renewal. Last year our province wrote a marvelous mission statement." I pointed out that my research showed that the statement had not caused any significant changes. His reply: "You anthropologists always want to see results! Ridiculous!"

Accept the Outsider-Insider Role. The well-trained and apostolically committed social researcher is an outsider and an insider at the same time. This is an inescapable cause of tension.

Social researchers, as insiders, are religious or members of a local church. They have a strong desire to feel a sense of belonging and oneness with others, to share with them the insights of their pastoral research. Yet the researchers' scientific ability and knowledge of the pastoral situation under study make them outsiders. Social researchers know too well and too deeply that people may feel threatened by such knowledge. They may fear that their traditional ways of thinking and acting are in danger of being undermined by the research.

Pastoral researchers feel a little like Jeremiah: the more they yearn to share their knowledge with others, the more they are marginalized out of fear of the consequences of this knowledge. Jeremiah copes with his marginalization only through faith and prayer. He grieves because he perceives the coming destruction of all that is dear to himself and the Israelites: Jerusalem, the temple, the kingdom. His grief is exacerbated by the fact that his fellow Israelites deny the signs of the coming destruction and exile (5:3). They refuse to acknowledge their weakness and turn to Yahweh in a spirit of faith and hope (30:12). This pains Jeremiah deeply (8:18–22).

In a less exalted way, a social researcher can see scientifically that pastoral or congregational denial is taking place. Ongoing denial can only lead to disaster. The researcher is tempted to intolerant condemnation, cynicism, and the loss of professional objectivity. The temptation can be avoided only if the social scientist, like Jeremiah, turns in faith to God in earnest and persistent prayer. Out of faith-oriented grief at the failure of people to acknowledge reality, the researcher will experience a renewed sense of personal commitment to the Lord. The ways in which this occurs will be as God, not the social scientist, wishes.

Maintain a Sense of Humor. Personally, I believe that the most unappreciated gift of Jesus Christ is his sense of humor. He has a sense of the incongruous, which is at the heart of all true humor. On the one hand he is the king, yet on the other hand he lives as one who has nowhere to lay his head. He is charged to do the will of the Father, yet everything appears to end in disaster.

Christ accepts the incongruous because of his own inner detachment. He does not take himself too seriously. So also must it be with pastoral researchers. All they can do is do their best and let the outcome be in the hands of the Father. The moment researchers become over-anxious about the results of their work, let them sit down and laugh at their stupidity, at their plain forgetfulness of the mystery of God's providential presence.

The foundation of a sense of humor is detachment and humility. One simply has not got all the answers. When one thinks one has, then one is playing God—and that is immensely incongruous. No social scientist has the full truth about anything. There is always something to learn from other disciplines. And God can move in ways that are incomprehensible and mysterious to the most skilled of human beings.

Network Support. I personally doubt that a researcher who works alone, in and for the church, can maintain professional objectivity without the support of other professionals. Therefore, the pastoral researcher should foster a support network of professional people. They do not have to be social scientists. In fact, it may be better if they are not. There are a few people (an academic theologian, a psychologist, and a spiritual theologian) with

whom, from time to time, I chat freely about what I am trying to do. They listen and they challenge me. In the process they affirm the goodness of what I am struggling to do, through the social sciences, in the service of evangelization.

Use Contracts. Normally, before accepting a request for pastoral research, make sure the contract is carefully worked out. In particular, see that the people to whom the report is to be given are clearly specified. I would rarely accept an assignment in which the respondents in a survey were not permitted to see the complete report.

Feed the Imagination. It took me a long time to realize that I could not function effectively without feeding the imagination. Creativity does not function if we turn ourselves into workaholics. The more I become involved in fieldwork, the more I need opportunities for prayer, for walks, for music. Moments of insight come at the oddest moments if we are prepared to create space for ourselves. W.B. Yeats put it so well in his poem *Vacillation*:

My fiftieth year had come and gone,
I sat, a solitary man,
In a crowded London shop, . . .
While on the shop and street I gazed
My body of a sudden blazed; . . .
It seemed so great my happiness, . . .

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Are Social Scientists Authorities on Morality?

William A. Barry, S.J., Ph.D.

When I was a graduate student in clinical psychology at the University of Michigan, I wrote a paper on homosexuality for a course on psychopathology. While researching the paper, I read a great deal of the psychiatric and psychological literature on the subject. In the course of this reading I realized that many value judgments were being made under the guise of scientific argument. Indeed, in the paper I concluded that most writers were using, without knowing or acknowledging it, a natural-law argument when they argued that homosexuality per se was a psychic disorder. There was evidence from psychological research, for example, that blind analysis of psychological tests of homosexuals and heterosexuals could not differentiate the two groups. Homosexuals or heterosexuals might be schizophrenic, obsessive-compulsive, or hysterical personalities, or just ordinary neurotics, but psychological testing by itself cannot reliably identify their sexual preferences.

It seemed to me that those who argued for a diagnosis of psychic disorder solely on the basis of sexual preference for the same sex were extrapolating from their limited data (for example, from their sample of homosexual men who sought psychotherapy) to the population at large. For some reason they presumed that any homosexual orientation was a psychic disorder, although they had no conclusive evidence for the presumption. They were operating, I believed, on the principle that

any sexual activity except that between men and women is unnatural. Now, one can make this argument on the grounds of a natural-law philosophy, but I do not believe that it is sustainable on the basis of any scientific rationale that I know.

SOCIAL SCIENTIST BECOMES GURU

I bring up this bit of personal history because of a growing concern that unexamined cultural and philosophical biases are being used for public purposes under the mantle of scientific objectivity. The Baby M case is only one recent example. There, the "expert testimony" of psychologists and psychiatrists was used to determine whether the home of the surrogate mother or that of the biological father would be better for the child. In a review of Richard A. Marafiotte's *The Custody of Children: A Behavioral Assessment Model* (in *Contemporary Psychology*, 1987, no. 1), Robert Hawkins makes this mind-boggling statement: "Marafiotte acknowledges that neither behavioral assessment nor traditional assessment has been experimentally demonstrated to improve child-custody decisions, but the rootedness of behavioral assessment in basic science and its oft-demonstrated value in applied science (including clinical science) argue persuasively for its promise in custody decisions." Thus, although there is no evidence that such assessments improve child-custody decisions, we are still

supposed to put our faith in them because they are rooted in "science."

Hawkins then argues that "the assessment would focus on each parent's adequacy as a model for the child, each parent's general competence at parenting, the child's current repertoire of behavior in various kinds of situations, the environmental conditions predicted in each alternative living arrangement, and each party's self-predicted behavior under each alternative living arrangement." Clear away all the "scientific" jargon and then ask this question: On what grounds does one make the judgment about "each parent's adequacy as a model for the child?" At the end of the review, Hawkins comments favorably on Marafiotte's direct and clear writing style and gives as an example "the statement that the primary concern in child-custody assessment is to provide the child with an environment that has 'the necessary conditions for the child to acquire and maintain a behavioral repertoire which will result in the greatest number of positive outcomes and the least number of negative ones.'" Once again, when we clear away the gobbledygook, we must ask, Who will say, and on what grounds, what are the "greatest number of positive outcomes and the least number of negative ones" for the child? For example, is a belief in a transcendent God a positive outcome? Or an altruistic love of neighbor, even when it is dangerous? How will the behavioral scientist decide on answers to such questions?

I do not raise these questions to denigrate the attainments of behavioral science and of psychotherapy and counseling. We have been enriched by the heroic efforts of modern social science to understand human behavior. But we must ask whether we have been sufficiently critical in the face of the massive cultural shift brought about by the achievements of social scientists in this century. The social scientist has become the new *arbiter elegantiae*, the new guru who defines what the good life is for people and institutions in our society. So-called expert testimony in court cases about child custody is but one example. Another is when a psychiatrist or psychologist is brought into a radio or television discussion about sexuality to discourse about the normality or abnormality of various sexual practices. A final example is provided by religious people who want to discuss issues of moral and faith development, chastity, homosexuality, or readiness for entrance into the seminary or religious life. Often enough, our first tendency is to seek out the psychologist or psychiatrist for expert advice.

SCIENCE HAS LIMITS

The quarrel here is not with the seeking of advice from the social scientist. It seems only prudent in any important corporate or individual decision to

**In the absence
of a shared
value system,
we look for help
wherever we can**

get the benefit of as much expertise as possible. I fear that we often go beyond the seeking of advice and ask the social scientist to make moral and prudential decisions for which he or she has no more training or knowledge than any other citizen. Social scientists can tell us, perhaps, that a certain percentage (let's say 75 percent) of parents who exhibit a particular behavior in a test or experiment have been found to be physically abusive to their children. They cannot tell us with much accuracy at all, in most instances, what differentiates the 75 percent from the other 25 percent. Those who have to make decisions in child-custody cases would want to know the odds of a parent being physically abusive, but they cannot have certainty. Those of us who seek the advice of social scientists and clinical practitioners need to know the limitations as well as the strengths of the particular disciplines involved. Moreover, we need to know that neither social science nor clinical practice is a necessary source of philosophical, theological, or religious wisdom.

In *The Battle for Human Nature: Science, Morality and Modern Life*, Barry Schwartz, a professor of psychology at Swarthmore, argues trenchantly that our society is in mortal danger because we accept as self-evident the view of human nature promulgated by the sciences of economics, sociobiology, and behavioral psychology. According to this view, human beings by nature operate out of self-interest. It can be summed up in this quote from Michael Ghiselin's *The Economy of Nature and the Evolution of Sex*:

The evolution of society fits the Darwinian paradigm in its most individualistic form The economy of nature is competitive



from beginning to end. . . . No hint of genuine charity ameliorates our vision of society, once sentimentalism has been laid aside. What passes for cooperation turns out to be a mixture of opportunism and exploitation. . . . Scratch an altruist and watch a hypocrite bleed.

Schwartz carefully analyzes how this view of what constitutes human nature has gradually permeated our culture and, in his opinion, threatens to undermine the very freedom and democracy we cherish. For on this premise, freedom and morality are phantoms.

There are two ways that we are tempted to make social science the *arbiter elegantiae*. First, we forget that all scientific laws are hedged by the qualifier "all things being equal." "All things being equal, bodies fall at a constant rate" means something like this: "Bodies fall at a constant rate if nothing gets in the way, if atmospheric conditions do not interfere, etc." But, of course, outside the laboratory such conditions do interfere. So, too, the "law" that human beings act to maximize personal gain applies only under certain restricted conditions. For example, such a law cannot explain the actions of Father Damien, who out of love for the lepers of Molokai so gave himself to their service that he

contracted the disease. All things are never equal in real life, especially where personal and cultural values come into play.

"IS" VERSUS "OUGHT"

Second, there is a subtle shift from "is" to "ought" that goes on in people's minds, often without awareness. Because, for example, workers in a modern factory do seem to act the way economists predict they will, there is a presumption that a modern factory system is the way work ought to be done. There is little awareness that the modern factory is an invention of human beings and can be changed by human beings if they want to change it. Moreover, they may want to change it because of noneconomic values. If a social science survey were to find that 95 percent of all married men engage in extramarital affairs, or that the same percentage of taxpayers cheat on their income tax returns, or that everyone has some racial or ethnic prejudice, would these facts shed any light on what ought to be? Yet notice how many times in discussions of morality, statistics are bandied about as though their facticity, their "isness," might illuminate what ought to be. "Everybody's doing it" has never been a valid moral argument. The most that any science can tell us is what is, in fact, the case; it cannot tell us what we ought to do.

SEEK ASSISTANCE, NOT ANSWERS

Why do we turn to social scientists so readily for answers to life's most puzzling questions? In the absence of a shared value system, we look for help wherever we can. Science has the aura of being successful at what it sets out to do. Social science can show an impressive array of achievements in the study of human behavior. So we turn to the social scientist as the expert on human behavior. And when we take the findings of the social scientist as a help in our decision making, we are being intelligent. But the social sciences cannot give us our values or create for us communities of shared values. These we must find elsewhere. And if com-

munities of shared values (what Bellah et al. call "communities of memory" in *Habits of the Heart*) are lacking—as I believe they are, not only in secular society but also in religious groups—then we must do our utmost to try to develop such communities. *Habits of the Heart* gives us some ways of moving in this direction. In a previous article in HUMAN DEVELOPMENT (Winter 1987, "What Makes a Group a Community?") I pointed out some other possibilities. Both secular society and religious groups are faced with a massive undertaking: to form communities of shared values. No doubt social scientists can help us in this monumental task, but it would be a dangerous error to make social scientists the final arbiters of what our values are or ought to be.

Indeed, social scientists who know their metier produce their best advice and expert testimony for individuals and groups who know what they want and value. For example, the best psychological assessments of candidates for a religious congregation I have seen came from a psychologist who had confidence that the religious congregation for which he did the assessments knew what it wanted and did not use the psychological assessments as the last word on a candidate's fitness for the life. In other words, he could be an astute psychological examiner assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the personality of the candidate and let the congregation use his expertise, but he knew that he was not the deciding voice. The congregation had a fairly clear idea of what its values were and what kind of candidate it was looking for.

The final word on the use of social science for any value decision: caveat emptor.

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DEVELOPMENT OF ORGANIZATIONS

*Like individuals, they grow through
predictable stages, then decline.*

Len Sperry, M.D., Ph.D.

The course of world events has undergone extraordinary changes in the past twelve years. Changes in the world of organizational development have been no less dramatic. When my book on organizations and change was published in 1977, the common catch phrases and concerns were executive style, theory X versus theory Y, top management planning, and productivity and profitability. Today the corollaries of these are entrepreneurial style, theory Z and corporate culture, strategic thinking, and excellence. These shifts in emphasis over the past twelve years signal a softening of the traditional adversarial stance between leader and follower, as a more collaborative "us" slowly replaces "us and them."

The collaborative us was the ideal espoused by myself and others in the 1970s. My book was different from other books on organizational development then, in that it was written for both leaders and followers. My hope was that both groups could look through both ends of the organizational telescope and better understand each other's perspectives. There were descriptions and assessment devices to aid in understanding corporate needs,

values, and stages of an organization's growth and decline, as well as individual needs, values, and stages of personal development. There was also a strategic planning model for increasing the "goodness of fit" between the individual and the organization.

Since 1977 much has been written about stages of individual development, but relatively little has been written about stages of organizational development and their impact on individuals.

Today, an ever-increasing number of people are involved in strategic planning for a nonprofit organization, be it a service corporation, professional organization, diocesan department, parish, or religious community. Many of these people are quite knowledgeable about the stages of the individual's journey through life, but few are familiar with the stages of the organization's journey.

Organizations, like individuals, face predictable crises and transitions as they develop. This article provides a road map of the organization's journey from birth through its prime and its eventual demise. It is hoped that the information presented here will be useful in understanding and accepting

the past history of an organization, predicting the challenges, crises, and demands of its journey at future stages, and planning for the prevention of unnecessary crises and premature decline. This information may also offer both solace and a measure of hope to those who have been bruised or disenchanted on their organizational journey.

DIMENSIONS OF DEVELOPMENT

Organizational development is the process of planning and implementing change in the overall capacity of an organization to achieve its stated purposes. To understand an organization, one should be familiar with five dimensions of organizational development: critical tasks, structure and design, strategic planning and development functions, leadership pattern and style, and compatibility of individual and organizational styles.

Critical tasks are the main goals or preoccupations that an organization must contend with during a particular stage of development. Such tasks may include identifying a service or ministry and a target group, developing an organizational culture, and avoiding extinction.

Structure and design are the basic building blocks or patterns that hold an organization together and (if hopes are realized) result in the desired outcomes. Common basic structures are authority, roles, responsibilities, reporting patterns, policies, and objectives. Initially, these structures are informal and assumed. It is only with demand and the passage of time that they become articulated and formalized.

Strategic planning refers to the process of envisioning an organization's future and developing the strategies and operations to achieve it. Development is the training and empowering of members at various levels of the organization to function effectively within the organization's structure. These planning and development functions become more clearly articulated as the organization progresses through its developmental stages.

Leadership pattern and style consist of specific leader behaviors that affect and influence the behaviors of followers. Research indicates that certain leadership patterns and styles are more effective at different organizational stages. In his study of organizational change, Ichak Adizes has found that there are three distinct leadership roles and patterns: entrepreneur, performer, and administrator. The entrepreneur—the creative and innovative visionary and risk-taker—craves both change and control over people and events. He or she can easily transform an idea into reality and singlehandedly create an organization. The performer—the doer with a task-focused leadership style—is diligent, dedicated, and loyal in carrying out the task assigned. He or she focuses exclusively on what needs to be done. The administrator, who focuses on how

things should be done, craves order and the status quo. Better at managing operating systems than either the entrepreneur or the performer, the administrator is comfortable with bureaucratic matters. The more a leader is able to adapt leadership styles to the organization's needs, the more valuable and effective is that leader. In Christian parlance, the entrepreneur corresponds to the prophet, the performer to the priest, and the administrator to the king.

Adizes believes that specific leadership styles are desirable at each organizational stage. In the growing stages, the organization functions best when the leader models the next stages. In the declining stages, however, the leader must model the previous stages, lest his or her leadership accelerate the organization's decline. For instance, the styles of the entrepreneur and performer are most compatible with the new venture stage, whereas the administrative style is more compatible with early bureaucratization.

Finally, compatibility of individual and organizational styles is the degree to which the organization's needs and values match the individual's. The stages of dependence, independence, and interdependence represent a continuum of individual growth and maturity, whereas autocratic, consultative, and collaborative-participative leadership represent levels of leader-organizational maturity.

Dependence is a submissive and subordinate stance toward authority and an abdication of personal rights and responsibility. Dependent members of an organization tend to overidealize leaders initially and to devalue them later as they move into negative independence. Negative independence is a challenging, even rebellious, freedom from and against dependency; positive independence is a more conciliatory and productive type of self-definition and assertion. Interdependence is the mature balance between depending on others and depending on one's own resources.

STAGES OF GROWTH AND DECLINE

Stage I: New Venture. The organization's critical task at Stage I includes defining a target group (e.g., hospital patients, elderly parishioners, health care professionals) and developing a service or ministry for that group. Accomplishing this requires the ability to uncover a market need, the willingness to make a risky investment of time, energy, and money to create an organization that satisfies the unmet need, and the ability to create an embryonic organizational structure that can provide a service to the target group. This involves developing a basic system for day-to-day operations and finding individuals to staff the organization. These tasks are suited to the abilities of the entrepreneurial leader, whose leadership style is most compatible with this stage.

STAGES AND DIMENSIONS OF ORGANIZATIONS

DIMENSION STAGE	ORGANIZATION'S CRITICAL TASK OR FUNCTION	ORGANIZATION'S DESIGN AND STRUCTURE	STRATEGIC PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT	LEADERSHIP PATTERN AND STYLE	COMPATIBLE INDIVIDUAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL STYLE
I NEW VENTURE	Define target group; develop a service for that group	Informal, flexible with undefined responsibilities	Principally on-the-job training	Entrepreneur-Performer (Prophetic)	Dependent—autocratic
II EXPANSION	Develop resources and operating system	Informal, with some differentiation of roles and responsibilities	Basic human resources and skill training	Entrepreneur-Administrator (Priestly)	Negative independent—autocratic
III PROFESSIONALIZATION	Develop strategic management system	Formal, with explicit role descriptions that are mutually exclusive	Advanced skills of leadership	Administrator-Integrator (Kingly)	Positive independent—consultative or participative
IV CONSOLIDATION	Maintain growth and develop corporate culture	Formal, with widespread commitment to mission statement and implementing strategies	Human resources development programming for upgrading skills and knowledge	Entrepreneur-Integrator (Prophetic-priestly-kingly)	Interdependent—collaborative consensus
V EARLY BUREAUCRATIZATION	Maintain operating system	Limited communications and decreased commitment	Existing programs ineffective; non-response	Inefficient administrator	Negative independent—autocratic or token consultative
VI LATE BUREAUCRATIZATION	Avoid extinction	Conflictual; little commitment	Token programming	Ineffective administrator	Dependent—autocratic

At first the organization is likely to be quite small in terms of members and clientele and thus may be a flexible and informal structure. There may be little role differentiation among leaders and followers. The planning and development functions do not need to be formalized at first, and on-the-job training is prevalent. The entrepreneurial leadership style, especially when combined with the performance style, is particularly effective in keeping the vision and the embryonic organizational structure viable. The entrepreneurial leadership pattern lends itself to the autocratic or benevolent organizational style: because of their visionary and risk-taking stance and their hard-won success, entrepreneur-performers easily become objects of admiration. They tend to attract organization members who are in awe of the founder's success

and who thus easily accept a dependent and acquiescent stance.

Stage II: Expansion. This is the stage of rapid growth that commences very quickly, often after the organization has been in Stage I for many years. The major problems that occur in Stage II involve growth rather than survival. Organizational resources are stretched to the limit as a new wave of members join the organization, as demands for services increase, and as the organization's rather primitive day-to-day operating system becomes overwhelmed. Turnover may be high. Organizational "growing pains" are painfully present.

Eric Flenholtz notes that growing pains are normal at this stage and are to be expected. They

signal that changes are needed, and they cannot be ignored. Growing pains imply that the organization has not been fully successful in developing the internal system it needs at a given stage of growth. If the founder is unable to cope with the management problems that arise at this stage, the organization is likely to flounder—even to fail. Not surprisingly, the critical task at this stage is to develop an infrastructure of operating systems that ensure efficiency and effectiveness. As this more complex operating system develops, the organizational structures become more clearly differentiated.

Basic human-resources training becomes a necessity at this stage. All individuals in management positions should be competent in basic management and delegation skills. The entrepreneur, who shines in Stage I, tends to be less interested in the unglamorous challenges of Stage II. Thus, there is a need at Stage II for the administrative dimensions of leadership to blend with the entrepreneurial. The entrepreneurial-administrative style and the turmoil wrought by the growing pains of Stage II almost guarantee that members will begin to feel disenchanted with leadership and dissatisfied with the organization itself. Member turnover and rebelliousness are manifestations of negative independence, particularly when leaders are slow to decentralize and share power, or when they vacillate by proposing and then rejecting initiatives to delegate and decentralize.

Stage III: Professionalization. Stages I and II represent entrepreneurial organization. Even though an organization in either of these stages may lack well-defined goals, policies, plans, or controls, it is able to prosper. But once a critical size has been attained, the structure and operating system must be further formalized. Another wave of new members necessitates more formal planning, defined roles and responsibilities, performance standards, and control systems.

Developing a professional management system becomes the critical task. This in turn requires a planned organizational development program that provides the level of skill training needed to implement the new management system. Those in leadership must change and increase their skills and capabilities.

The integrative leadership pattern is characterized by sensitivity and a people-oriented approach. Optimal leadership at this stage involves an administrative-integrative style. Not surprisingly, an organizational climate that encourages consultative, participative management matches well with members who have a positive, independent style.

Stage IV: Consolidation. After it becomes a professionally managed system, the organization can focus its efforts on consolidation. This means maintaining a reasonable increase in growth while de-

Challenges, crises, and growing pains are experienced differently by the organization's members at different stages

veloping an organizational culture. In their book *Corporate Cultures*, Terrence Deal and Allan A. Kennedy define organizational culture as the shared set of beliefs, values, and norms that govern the day-to-day behavior of an organization's members ("the way we do things around here").

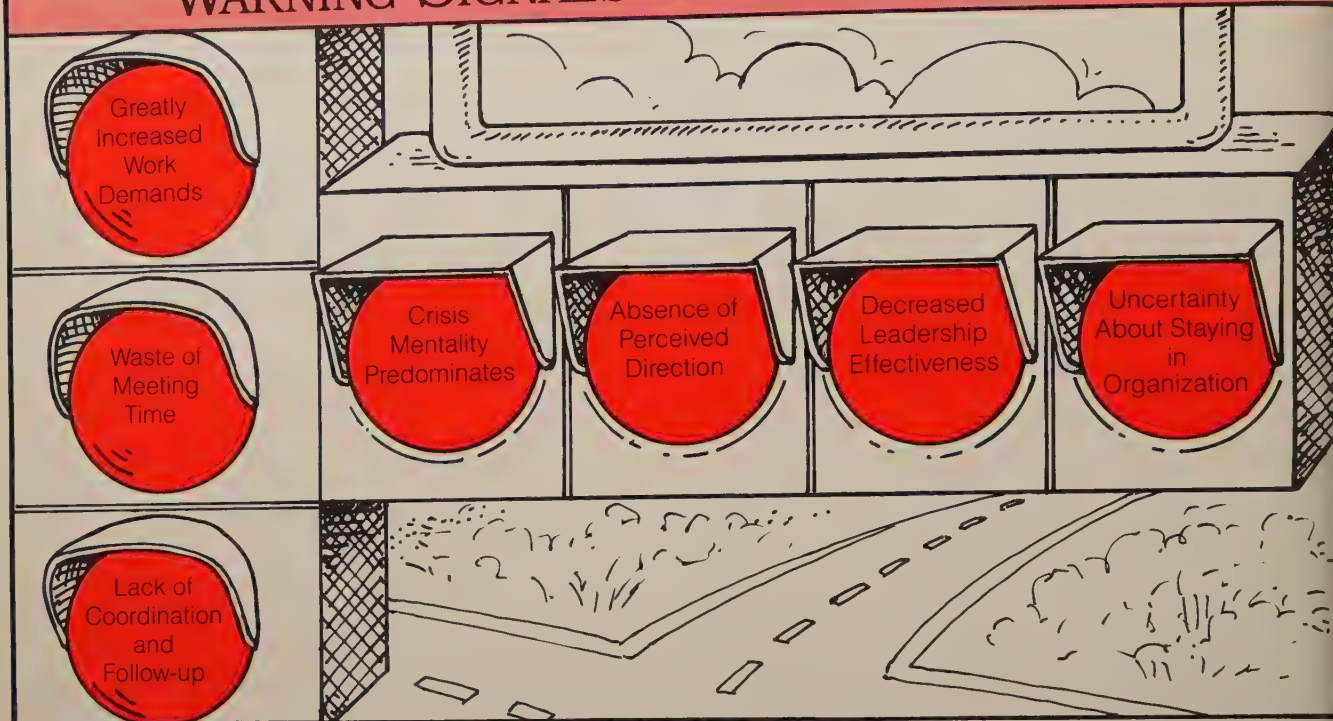
In Stage I the organization's culture was transmitted by contact between the founder(s) and members. In Stage II the first wave of members transmitted the culture to the next wave. This informal mode of socialization became much less effective and adequate, however, with the subsequent waves of members in Stage III.

In Stage IV culture becomes a critical concern. A more conscious and formal method of transmission is needed; otherwise, members may no longer share a vision of what the organization is or where it is going. As a result, they may interpret the culture in ways that meet their own needs but not those of the organization.

First, the organization's culture must be assessed. For example, the culture of a particular organization may contain the following values, beliefs, and norms: avoid conflict, set unrealistic performance expectations, avoid accountability, tolerate poor performance. Next, the organization must decide on more appropriate cultural standards: make two-way communication and conflict resolution high priorities, set realistic performance expectations, show concern for quality, encourage innovation, do not tolerate poor performance.

Stage IV's organizational structure is a further enhancement and articulation of Stage III's. Knowledge of and commitment to the organization's mission statement is widespread throughout the organization, as are its implementation strate-

SEQUENCE OF ORGANIZATIONAL WARNING SIGNALS AND GROWING PAINS



gies. This is reflected both in the orientation process for new members and in conferences and newsletters for existing members. The members are respected and prized, and human resources development programming is thus an integral part of the organization. Members' horizons, knowledge bases, and skills are upgraded regularly. Leadership that combines the entrepreneurial and integrative styles is most compatible with Stage IV functioning. Now that administrative leadership has professionalized the organization in Stage III, entrepreneurial leadership is needed to rekindle and augment the original dream and to motivate and challenge the people in the organization, especially the fourth wave of new members. At this stage, individual members functioning with an interdependent style are most compatible with the organization's collaborative-consensus style.

Stage V: Early Bureaucratization. As the organization enters this stage, there is a subtle but clear shift from substance to form. Status seeking, a "business-as-usual" attitude, and concern with appearances characterize the behavior of members. The organization is usually well endowed at this

stage and may be cash-rich for the first time in its history.

Later in this stage, the focus shifts to internal turf wars. Backbiting, coalition building, and paranoia are common. "Growing pains" are particularly intense as members' dissatisfaction mounts. In some organizations, negativity threatens to poison the organization's climate. Leadership, at first content to rest on the organization's laurels, now shifts to a self-protective attitude. Cliques become the usual networks of communication; the best and the brightest start to leave the organization.

The organization is clearly in a state of decline. The structures and the planning and development functions are much less responsive than they were in previous stages. The administrative leadership becomes inefficient in the later part of this stage. Decentralization and delegation become increasingly threatening to leadership, and efforts to re-centralize power are expected behaviors. Negative independence and the return of an autocratic or a token (but impotent) consultative style are likely.

Stage VI: Late Bureaucratization. Many of the sub-units and subsystems of the organization are

clearly dysfunctional. Miscommunication is commonplace; two-way communication is alien. Coordination and follow-through are the exception rather than the rule. The right hand barely knows that the left hand exists, much less what it is doing. New members are no longer informed of the mission statement and strategy. For all members, the organizational culture reflects a sense of helplessness and lack of a common direction. "Come late, leave early," "do as little as you have to," "don't try to change anything," and "protect job security at all costs" are attitudes that characterize the culture. The critical function at this stage is to forestall and avoid extinction, as the organization is figuratively in intensive care and being maintained by external life-support systems. The formally structured systems have become conflictual and unresponsive to the needs of both members and clientele. Little if any training and development occur. Administrative leadership struggles to buy time, to prolong the organization's life before its demise is imminent. Inefficiency and ineffectiveness are to be expected. Clients find that access to responsive subsystems is rare. Not surprisingly, the reemergence of the dependent style in members complements the autocratic style of leadership. The eventual demise of the organization is inevitable, and consultants report that the prognosis, despite heroic interventions, is poor.

Like individuals, organizations proceed through predictable stages of growth and decline. Challenges, crises, and growing pains are experienced differently by the organization's members at dif-

ferent stages. As research continues to confirm and further articulate these organizational stages, leaders and followers can more confidently plan, predict, and define the future of their organizations and missions.

RECOMMENDED READING

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- Pfeiffer, J., L. Goodstein, and T. Nolan. *Shaping Strategic Planning*. Glenview, Illinois: Scott, Foresman Publishers, 1988.
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Len Sperry, M.D., Ph.D., is a faculty member at the Medical College of Wisconsin in the departments of Psychiatry and Preventive Medicine. He is the author of numerous books and articles on psychology, spiritual growth, and health.

Caffeine Abuse Causes Emotional Symptoms

Psy psychiatrist Andrew H. Mebane of the Ochsner Clinic in New Orleans has been conducting research on the connection between caffeine consumption and psychiatric disorders. He has found that 10 percent of American adults suffer from caffeine-related disorders such as chronic fatigue, insomnia, and headaches.

Dr. Mebane's research shows that caffeine abuse reduces the body's anxiety-relieving systems, blocks the pain-management mechanism in nerves, and decreases the effectiveness of antidepressant and tranquilizing medicines. He observes that if caffeine at bedtime creates no sleeping problem, you may be addicted. Some of Dr. Mebane's recommendations:

- Keep your daily intake of caffeine below 350 milligrams: three cups of coffee, five cups of tea, or six cans of most sodas.
- Don't stop taking in caffeine all at once. It's better to cut back by one cup or can per day.
- Check the caffeine content of over-the-counter drugs, particularly painkillers.

Excessive use of caffeine can sometimes produce symptoms of severe illness, such as panic attacks or psychoses. Dr. Mebane has reported a case in which "a truck driver who was diagnosed as being schizophrenic had simply upped his intake of Coke from ten to twenty cans a day."

A Diocesan Priest's Obedience

George Aschenbrenner, S.J., S.T.D.

Obedience and authority, especially today, are frequently found to be a partnership in faith that is strained—even nervously distrustful. In such an uneasy alliance, either partner can be a threat to the other in a way that disrupts unity and enervates zeal for service. An authoritarian command to “be quiet and do what you’re told” hardly invites mature response and partnership. Nor does the arrogant charge that “nobody’s going to tell me what to do” invite responsible dialogue and interaction with religious authority. In recent years the interpretation and practice of obedience and authority have vacillated easily—sometimes abruptly—between these extremes. The reasons for such a tense, vacillating relationship are often obvious. Nonetheless, to capitulate to such a tension, or simply to give up the struggle for any balance in this partnership in faith, has serious effects on the corporate identity and mission of active apostles in the church.

This article deals with the obedience-authority partnership in the diocesan priesthood. Its thesis is that diocesan priestly obedience should always be oriented to corporate unity and corporate service within a presbyterate. Undoubtedly, what is here described is already being practiced in some dioceses to a greater or lesser degree. But the precise claim of this article is that beyond certain practices in different dioceses, what is needed is an explicitly recognized, consciously articulated, and therefore (at least in most cases) new conceptualization of diocesan priestly obedience. Before developing my thesis, I will sketch some of the contemporary secular challenges to obedience and review some

aspects of the radically obedient life to which baptismal experience commits a disciple of Jesus Christ. In seeking to reveal diocesan obedience as essentially related to unity and apostolic mission, I will describe some fundamental attitudes enjoined on a bishop and his priests—attitudes invited by, and expressed in, a distinctive apostolic placement process. I will conclude with a description of three concrete signs of diocesan unity and service—signs produced by an organic integration of these attitudes with the placement process intended.

This reflection is by a religious. But it is offered—and, if need be, may be pardoned—on the grounds of the writer’s longstanding and growing knowledge and admiration of diocesan priestly life, and his role (for the fourth year) as director of the, spiritual formation program at the North American College, the residence in Rome of many North American seminarians preparing for the priesthood.

OBEDIENCE AND TODAY’S CULTURE

In the book *Megatrends*, in which he describes ten new directions that are transforming our lives, John Naisbitt delineates a persistent development toward decentralization over centralization, toward participative over representative democracy, and toward horizontal networking over vertical hierarchy. In the Catholic church as a whole, and in most dioceses, the effects these megatrends have had since Vatican II are clear for all to see. And although these more participative, decentralizing developments at first brought confusion and consternation, it is now clear that in many ways

they have enriched and renewed our faith as a church, as well as our compassionately decisive involvement in the modern world.

But these secular trends and developments, as they continue to influence us as believers, also raise some serious questions of identity: What does it mean to be a church? What does it mean to be a diocese? Obviously, the answers to these questions color our view of authority and obedience. The church struggles to recognize the Holy Spirit's invitation to incorporate the influence of certain secular developments, yet also to recognize "limit" situations in which faith must firmly resist a secular spirit or development. Can the contemporary secular movement toward participative democratic decentralization finally lead us, as a church, to bury any semblance of hierarchically centralized identity? In my opinion, this challenging question concerns one of those "limit" situations for our Catholic faith. If we are to face the issue honestly and carefully, we must avoid being trapped in the overly facile assumption that the governing style and organization of any group can only be either hierarchically centralized or participatively decentralized.

Felt membership in a local network or group will never suffice for full Catholic identity and mission. And one cannot help but wonder how much of the recent loss of a lively sense of felt membership, corporate identity, and missionary enthusiasm in certain church groups and dioceses has resulted from too much decentralization. The challenge facing the whole church and every diocese is not to reject stubbornly every sign of participative democracy as corruptive and contradictory to Catholic hierarchical centralization. Rather, notwithstanding some of the strong secular influence of our American culture, the challenge is to devise a creative and appropriate way to integrate democratic decentralization and hierarchical centralization. This new, creatively integrated model could diminish an alienating sense of fragmentation and increase the sense of membership, involvement, and commitment to mission on the part of everyone in the church or in a particular diocese. This article is an attempt to situate within such a creatively integrated diocesan model an understanding of the respectful obedience of diocesan priesthood.

ASPECTS OF OBEDIENCE

A Christian disciple's experience of obedience is always religiously motivated. The obedience with which this article is concerned, far beyond any purely secular or sociological experience, is always chiefly motivated and determined by the religious experience of God's love. Johannes Metz, in *Followers of Christ*, pointedly describes the essence of Christian obedience: "Obedience as an evangelical

**Only respectful,
mature obedience
invites and allows
an adult, creatively
governing authority**

virtue is the radical and uncalculated surrender of one's life to God the Father who raises up and liberates." As a religious experience, obedience is a person's response to the attractiveness of God's love as revealed in the Spirit of Jesus Christ. Without enough genuine knowledge and love of Jesus, the life and service of obedience is quite deficient, if possible at all. Francis Moloney, in describing the evangelical imperative of obedience in *A Life of Promise*, claims that "Jesus did not found a group of disciples to control God's kingdom. He called them to 'follow' him, and to call others to pursue that same journey, to fall, out of control, into the hands of a loving and jealous God, as he leads them into *his* future." And so the disciple's obedience, however anguished or easy, is never a forfeiting of responsible freedom, even as it effects a union with God in love, deep peace, and energetic joy. Such a life of falling out of control into God is not a heroism of supererogation; rather, it "encompass(es) the whole of the Christian response" and makes obedience "certainly the most radically demanding of all the evangelical imperatives." Once again, without a lively sense of God's love, the Christian life as obediently faithful response is hardly possible at all. Obedience, as all who practice it know well, demands a spirituality that is profoundly rooted in such faith.

The Christian disciple's obedience to God's love in imitation of Jesus is also always ecclesial. It is mediated within and through the church. Together with acknowledging the inviolability of an individual's maturely and competently formed conscience, it is important to recognize that the obedience of Christian discipleship is not simply an individualistic "God and me" encounter. Ecclesial

mediation is central to the fundamental baptismal commitment and continues to play a central role in the obedience of other forms of consecration that further specify and develop that first foundational commitment. It is also the primary community and locus for the formation of conscience. And though Christian obedience is always finally oriented to an interpersonal experience of God's will of love, the divine authority revealing this will of love is ecclesial—and therefore is necessarily mediated in various human ways. When these channels of human mediation trouble and challenge us, as they often do, we cannot simply write them off as excessively legalistic minutiae or culturally outdated phenomena. Behind what seems to be simply an outdated governmental style or process of group dynamics may be something much more important: a profoundly theological, spiritual mystery revealed in Christ. And that is not disposed of too easily. The human channels of religious authority that mediate God's loving presence will always challenge us to find the proper contemporary expression, purified enough to symbolize honestly and simply in faith the divine, loving source of all authority.

Because the obedience of Christian discipleship is always ecclesial and mediated, it happens within believers, is often encouraged by them, and deepens their corporate unity. The corporate dimension of presbyteral obedience is the focus of this article. When seen within the communal context, Christian obedience is, and cannot be other than, an interpersonal response to authority. Obedience and authority are so intimately related that it would be a serious mistake to consider the quality of priestly obedience as completely unaffected by the governmental style of local episcopal authority. This intimate interrelationship cuts both ways: a childish unhealthy exercise of authority can invite an immature response of obedience, and only respectful, mature obedience invites and allows an adult, creatively governing authority. The abandonment and submission of self involved in obedience cannot be oblivious to the style in which authority is exercised. A governing style that either allows others to do whatever they want or forces them to do something without any possibility of dialogue and understanding surely affects the quality of obedience. Even more important (and in line with this article's central thesis), it affects the unity and zeal of the community.

Within the Christian community, the relationship of authority and obedience is not that of parent and child. Rather, it is the mature relationship of two or more adults in faith. Whenever a paternalistic or maternalistic interaction of parent and child is substituted for this relationship between peers, the interplay of obedience and authority is corrupted. An overly parental prejudice, especially when combined with a lack of much

genuine experience of the expansiveness of God's love, can easily turn the radical entrusting of self in obedience into a whole range of authoritarian hang-ups. Precisely to avoid such authoritarian interferences, in recent years many groups have changed a paternal and maternal imaging of the obedience and authority relationship to something more fraternal and sisterly—but sometimes without preserving the clear lines of religious authority and leadership, which raises another problem that I will address further on.

UNITY FOR MISSION

This brief review of the fundamental mystery of Christian obedience as a religious, ecclesial, and adult experience in which one is always interpersonally related to authority provides a context in which the obedience of a diocesan presbyterate can be viewed as a corporate unity, energized for ministry. In contrast to the dynamic at work in a monastic group, this active vision and spirit draws apostles together for the sake of mission; they come together precisely to be sent forth. The physical presence of being together in community is not the chief and identifying characteristic of such a group. It is the desire to be sent forth that attracts the members to the group from the very beginning. And so the unity of the group must never prevent the sending forth of the members; the group must find its fulfillment in precisely that missioning and dispersion.

As a result, although many other characteristics of the members may and should enrich the group's unity, the most profound and influential bond among the members will be rooted in their appropriate sharing of the mission of Jesus. And the mission of Jesus is always rooted in the heart of the Trinity, in Jesus' full, intimate, shared life with his dear Father—that life of missionary love which is the Holy Spirit. In the passionate intensity of Jesus' presence and involvement in the world, we recognize the missionary love at the heart of the Trinity that sends him forth. From far beyond the world, Jesus is sent, and he immerses himself in the joy and sadness, the light and darkness, all the complicated entanglements of a fully human life. The mission of Jesus, therefore, is much more than the specific work he does. His mission cuts to the core of his being in an attitude and mentality always expressed in a distinctive context: compassion for his Father's urgent concern for loving justice in this world. It is this attitude, this mentality and presence, that lies behind and colors all he says and does and is. The gospel of John makes it especially clear that Jesus comes as one sent and that his mission is rooted in this continual, intimate experience of being sent by the Father. His mission is never a matter of sending himself. There simply is nothing of autodestruction about him.

For what I have spoken does not come from myself; no, what I was to say, what I had to speak, was commanded by the Father who sent me, and I know that his commands mean eternal life. And therefore what the Father has told me is what I speak. (Jn 12:49–50)

... and that I do nothing of myself; what the Father has taught me is what I preach; he who sent me is with me, and has not left me to myself, for I always do what pleases him. (Jn 8:28–29)

It is to this missionary attitude and identity that the risen Jesus commissions his apostles in the Upper Room: “As the Father sent me, so am I sending you” (Jn 20:21). And the *Acts of the Apostles* bear stunning testimony to the corporate availability of the apostles to be sent wherever the Spirit beckoned. In fact, the corporate identity of the young church seems to have consisted precisely in sharing this apostolic docility to the word of God.

In the active spirituality of a diocesan presbyterate, both bishops and priests must approach the sharing of the mission of Jesus with an attitude that is similarly profound and, at the same time, as practical as the concrete process of apostolic placement. Insofar as an attitude of “being sent as Jesus was” genuinely motivates every member of the presbyterate, and insofar as this is incarnated in the placement process of the diocese, the priestly sharing in the mystery of Jesus’ obedience—rather than simply resulting in individual ascetical experiences—can provide a corporate consciousness that will mission and unite not only the presbyterate itself but also the whole diocesan church.

Radiating from the bishop to all the priests, this deep-hearted desire to be sent—something clearly contrary both to the trap of sending oneself and to an immature fear of making decisions—requires a humble self-confidence and continuing experience of God’s missionary love in Jesus. The whole attitude and presence of the bishop, and the understanding of the diocesan placement process, must invite the prayerful initiative of each priest in an honest, unselfish investigation of God’s apostolic will for him here and now. Sometimes God’s will is quickly manifested; at other times it involves anguished soul-searching about selfish prejudices, profound contemplation of Jesus in his passion, and wide consultation with other people. Throughout this initial stage and all the way to the end of the whole process, the individual priest—while very personally engaged—is never motivated by the attitude or expectation that his own decision about his ministry will be ultimate and self-assertively fixed.

Only a graced freedom can keep each priest seriously engaged in the placement process and

The clear, fresh air of honesty and trust must keep open all diocesan channels of communication

ready to receive a ministerial assignment that is not simply his own decision. It is this same freedom that allows a priest’s present experience of receiving a diocesan assignment to be a genuine sharing in the mission of Jesus. This freedom will also prevent the same ministry’s collapse into a defensively clutched attachment. The freedom needed here is not a passive lack of concern about a future assignment. Rather, it is a dynamic gift created by a strongly intimate experience of God’s love, and therefore a gift able to infuse an inspiration and energy without which God’s apostolic desire might not even be recognized, much less embraced. When necessary, this freedom can even stretch the heart beyond the natural sensibleness of one’s own mind to an agonizing self-abandonment to the precious glory of God, as corporately perceived and corporately served by a presbyterate gathered around its episcopal leader in the challenging, geographically specific range of the diocese.

APOSTOLIC PLACEMENT PROCESS

If the sending forth of active apostles is to deepen a unifying bond in Christ and avoid chaos and dissension, then the diocesan religious authority must employ a particular style of government and type of placement process. In this way the apostolic availability and the obedient desire of each priest “to be sent as Jesus was” are invited and afforded concrete expression. Though various adaptations are possible, there must be a fundamental clarity of understanding about the placement process. Otherwise, what was never intended can happen: the process itself can confuse and prevent the desired corporate experience of obedience.

Part of this process is the expression of an overall

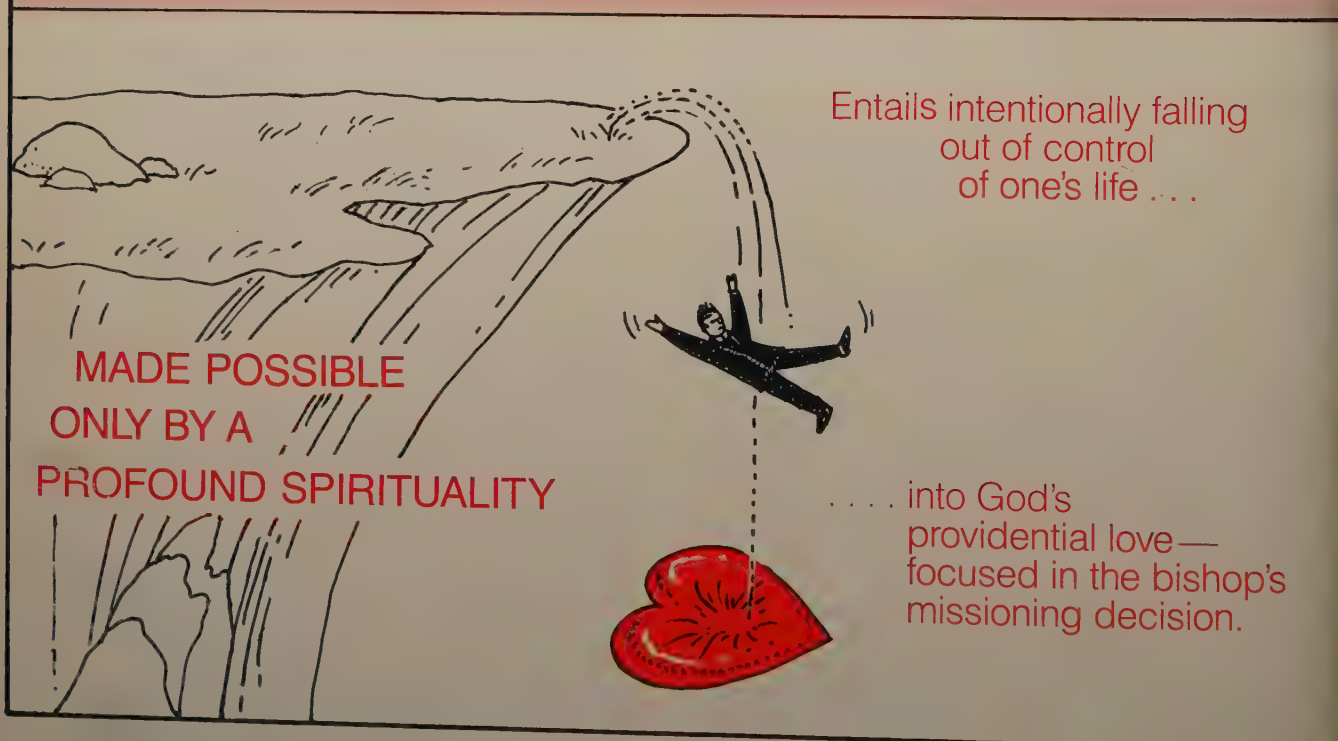
apostolic vision and set of priorities in the diocese—not as unilaterally promulgated from on high but, in an appropriate way, as corporately determined within the whole body of the diocese. In this vision and set of priorities, the unity longed for on the part of the whole presbyterate takes preliminary expression, stirs the Spirit's apostolic inspiration in each priest, and provides a context within which each priest's serious opinion will finally be tested—and whether it is a genuine mission or not will be revealed.

Within a diocese, the role and lines of religious authority must be clear. If episcopal authority is truly to render a special service for the corporate unity of the whole diocese, then not only must its presence and role be similarly perceived by all, but it must also function in line with this understanding daily. In this view each priest, through his prayerful engagement in the diocesan apostolic process, receives a specific ministerial assignment that has been decided interpersonally with him and intentionally for him but, finally, not simply by him. The bishop, who has himself been missioned in Christ, always has the final missioning authority in the diocese. This authority cannot be completely delegated to, much less usurped by, a personnel board or any other mechanism in the diocesan

structure. I do not mean to downplay the great aid that a personnel board or other diocesan structure can be to corporate unity and spirit. Rather, I want to repeat the point that the role and lines of religious authority in the diocese must remain personal as well as clear if they are to be directed toward unity of spirit and mission.

This view of missioning and obedience implies and requires a profound spirituality. Something more than sound organizational dynamics and conflict-resolution processes is needed. Often, in the absence of such spirituality, hidden agendas, political maneuvering, and various authoritarian hang-ups creep in and corrupt the experience of obedience. For the individual priest, "being sent as Jesus was" always culminates in an experience of receptivity and mature abandonment of one's whole self—a falling out of control of one's life and into God's providential love, as focused in the ultimate missioning decision of the bishop. Such an entrusting of self is hardly possible unless it is motivated by, and genuinely shares in, Jesus' own experience of the compelling attractiveness of a dear Father's faithful love. A profoundly incarnational faith is needed if one is to recognize and hearken to God's loving call, as mediated through the properly exercised episcopal authority of a specific, limited, and

PRIEST'S ABANDONMENT OF SELF IN OBEDIENCE



duly designated person. This human mediation, expressed in the person of the local ordinary and eventually grounded in a specific ecclesial understanding, is the quintessence of any incarnational view of diocesan priestly obedience. The main contention of this article is that this mediation can also be the chief propellant toward a unified sense of mission within a diocese.

However, if a priest makes his own unilateral decision about ministry, with whatever good will, or if he manipulates the accomplishment of his own will, even with the apparent legitimation of the placement process, he does not genuinely participate in or submit to another's decision. Instead, he "sends himself," which is quite opposed to the creative docility of obedience. This sending of self does not just segregate the individual; it splinters the corporate energy and zeal of the diocese.

The profound spirituality that inspires the diocesan placement process must include a genuine commitment to union in Christ on the part of the bishop and each of his brother priests. Without falling prey to a misguided, unrealistic sense of familial relationship or religious community, the seminary formation of diocesan priests must encourage a desire for, and some actual experience of, an appropriate corporate consciousness among the newly ordained. "Loner" and "rugged individualist" attitudes tend not only to disappoint the effectiveness of the individual priest's ministry but also to disrupt a unified diocesan experience of God's loving mission in Jesus. The clear, fresh air of honesty and trust must keep open all diocesan channels of communication.

A genuine concern for a sense of corporate membership and shared mission will make demands on the bishop and all the priests. It will take time and sacrifice and will test the creativity and commitment of all. Occasional, carefully planned gatherings of the whole presbyterate, priest support groups, shared silent retreat experiences of deep solitude, a diocesan newspaper, personal letters and phone calls, and many other means can create a corporate sense of priestly companionship and committed membership in the presbyterate. These are no luxuries for leisure time—joyous priestly celibacy demands such bonds of unity. And priestly obedience, when appropriately conceived and lived, can create such a corporate sense of unity and harness it with an enthusiasm for the generous service of God's loving justice within the diocese.

THE SIGNS OF UNITY

The unity among the priests in a diocese is something much desired but often not sufficiently worked at because of divergent expectations. Sometimes the unity expected is too superficially uniform in terms of either type of ministry or geographical place. Ministerially, the unity of a

diocese can depend too much on whether all the priests engage in the same sort of parochial work. Special, exceptional ministries may seem to interfere with presbyteral unity. Geographically, priestly unity in a diocese can depend too much on whether everyone serves within the limited area of the diocese. Although the call to serve a specific people within the boundaries of a diocese is central to diocesan priestly identity, the corporate solidarity of diocesan priesthood should run deeper than geography and should not seem disrupted by occasional (yet necessary) ministry outside the diocese. Although they surely have some effect on priestly unity, ministerial uniformity and geographical proximity cannot provide the deepest foundation for the corporate identity of a diocesan presbyterate.

The creative docility of priestly obedience, as expressed in the shared attitude of "being sent as Jesus was" through the proper diocesan apostolic placement process, can lay a much more profound foundation for unity and mission, rooted in the experience and heart of each priest in the presbyterate. Enthusiastic and unified service to all the people of a diocese demands much more than an uncertain unity superficially based on ministerial uniformity and geographical proximity. The people themselves expect more, and our promise before God of respect and obedience to the bishop makes us capable of a more profoundly corporate identity for mission.

This profoundly corporate and missionary identity of the diocesan priesthood can manifest itself in at least three ways. First, obedient unity in the experience of "being sent" produces a special consciousness of solidarity. Each priest knows that he has been missioned to a specific ministry in a specific place in order to share with his brother priests in Jesus' mission from his Father. It has not simply been a matter of his own choice. And so, to speak of administering a parish that "belongs to the whole diocese" is no cute or pious use of words; it delineates a clear mentality of corporate stewardship. Such an attitude, so different from the possessive one that clings to "my parish," conceives of every ministry as rooted in the Trinity and mediated through Jesus Christ and the bishop. When these become simply grandiose, high-sounding words, quite removed from the daily mentality and experience of the priests of a diocese, they then bespeak a serious failing in faith and defective priestly obedience. But if each priest's apostolic assignment is genuinely seen as rooted in the heart of the Trinity and mediated through Jesus Christ and episcopal authority, and therefore somehow belonging to the presbyterate as a whole, then each priest will find his heart strengthened and encouraged by a corporate bond of solidarity and shared membership that stretches far beyond the physical presence of his brother priests. In the growing phenomenon of one-priest parishes, this

encouraging bond of solidarity is nothing less than a lifeline.

Second, a corporate understanding of priestly obedience makes possible another important realization: that in some real way all the different diocesan ministries are of equal importance. Surely, in some ways, not all diocesan ministries are of completely equal importance. Yet if each ministerial assignment—from bishop's secretary to resident in the retired priests' home to pastor of a sprawling inner-city parish—is genuinely perceived and received as a particular brother priest's share in Jesus' mission in the Spirit from his Father, then there can be a basic and profound, if not total, equality to all these ministries. Far from an ethereal, vague distinction, this realization of the basic equality of all diocesan ministries is the best protection against some very real attitudes that we commonly adopt—especially competitive and ambitious attitudes that destroy diocesan unity. Whether one is assigned full time as prison, hospital, or military chaplain; whether one is pastor, assistant pastor, or simply in residence; whether one is assigned to an affluent suburban parish or to a financially insecure inner-city one; whether one receives a large or small salary—none of these circumstances will provoke ambitious jealousy and competitive rivalry if corporate priestly obedience reveals in some way the equal value of all diocesan assignments as genuine participations in Jesus' mission of being sent from his Father into a world so often darkly divided.

Third, the consciousness of priestly solidarity effected by shared obedience is also the best antidote, and perhaps the only effective one, to the kind of criticism that can divide a diocese—especially criticism of new and experimental ministries. If the few priests engaged in these new ministries know themselves, and are known by other priests of the diocese to have been chosen and sent as Jesus was, then in some real way these special ministries belong to the whole diocese, to the whole presbyterate, and are not the possessions of the individual priests involved. Rather than disgruntled criticism or prideful possessiveness of these special ministries, what is needed is persevering support of prayer and priestly interest, especially since new and experimental ministries often involve unique loneliness and challenge.

OBEDIENCE IS A SHARED MYSTERY

In this article I have presented a conceptualization—perhaps somewhat new—of the obedience of

the diocesan priesthood, as promised before God to the bishop. I have described an apostolic placement process and governmental style that call forth and incarnate on the part of every priest in a diocese the shared mentality of "being sent as Jesus was." In this view, obedience within a diocese becomes much more than a set of traffic regulations or an empty protocol. Rather, as a profound mystery shared in faith, obedience becomes a life, a vision, and a mission binding priests and bishop together as servant members in the midst of the whole people united for evangelization.

I suspect that in some cases, any acceptance of this article's suggestions may involve a challenging conversion of attitude and process—perhaps more than I can personally appreciate as a religious priest who does not live and serve within the ordinary diocesan framework. However, having developed a profound admiration and respect for the diocesan priesthood, I believe that we are well capable of, and could be deeply helped by, what I suggest here. Insofar as these suggestions become reality, I believe that the promise and practice of obedience will create a profound unity of priestly brotherhood—a brotherhood at once gathered around the bishop and decisively focused in joyful, magnanimous service to God's people.

All priests feel the need for the fellowship of priestly brotherhood, and wise ones seek it as best they can. We have learned in recent years, of course, that this can misfire into either an arrogant clericalism or an unhealthy "men's club" mentality. Or such bonding can be utterly nonexistent. But if we reconceive the implications of the promise of respect and obedience made on ordination day, then the fellowship of priestly brotherhood, besides involving enjoyable social times together, will be rooted in a shared religious experience of Calvary, where a faithful Son has fallen out of control into the loving hands of a dear Father—a Son who then, and now, in resurrection, knows and reveals a fullness of love promised for every diocese, its people, and its priests, whose hearts yearn profoundly for a new life.



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Growth at Midlife

Gloria Miller, S.M., R.N.

The seed seldom grows until something has cracked the husk of its potentiality and allowed its life to germinate and begin to grow. When one's husk is being cracked open one is seldom sure whether this is just a painful and necessary process or whether it is indeed the very destruction of one's being.

—Morton Kelsey, *Adventure Inward*

For about two years I had been aware of a moderate depression, with fatigue the key symptom. I was working in an institution that was going through difficult times, and I was reporting to two departments, each of which placed its own legitimate demands on me. I had been developing a nursing role for which I had been educated but which had never before been implemented at our hospital, and I derived a great deal of satisfaction in providing a service that was much appreciated by patients, other nurses, and physicians. The wealth of experience I had accumulated in seventeen years of nursing in a variety of roles and settings made me credible to myself and my colleagues. I had served as a preceptor and mentor and was frequently asked to troubleshoot serious patient problems. Patients often expressed a high degree of confidence in my ability and judgment.

Various community situations had required me to move twice in nine months, and I had not put down roots. To make matters worse, I had added a one-and-a-half-hour daily commute to my schedule. I felt fragmented, unable to settle down and get

organized. I knew I was "losing it," but my weak attempts to express this were usually met with reassurances that I was doing well. I didn't even have the energy to insist that I was *not* doing well, and I feared that if I did let go, I might never be able to function again.

Two months before my fortieth birthday, the treadmill came to a sudden halt with a bout of viral pneumonia that involved one week of hospitalization and a six-month recuperation period. At first I felt too sick to care much about anything, although it was jarring to have to leave work, and then home, without being able to pick up after myself.

When I was ready to leave the hospital, a community with whom I had formerly lived invited me to stay with them while I was recuperating because they were near my doctor and family and because some of the sisters would be home during the day to assist me with my meals. It was quite humbling to accept this invitation into a group when my very weak presence was all I had to bring. My former plan of "holding it together" till I got over my midlife battle was shattered by a fatigue that allowed me to do very little for myself, much less contribute to anyone else's welfare.

TROUGHS, PEAKS, AND PLATEAUS

The period of my illness could easily be plotted on a graph depicting sudden dips, slow rises, and long horizontal lines in a repeating pattern. During the descents into the troughs, I felt physically ill, had no energy, and was overcome by a depression

I needed to mourn the paths I had chosen not to explore

that caused more tears than I had ever shed before. The ascents always brought a spark of hope that "maybe this is it" but were followed by seemingly endless plateaus that allowed me to do very little. Although I felt well enough to do a great deal of reading and thinking during the plateaus, I fell back if I pushed myself too hard.

My depression became the initial focus of psychotherapy with a sister from another community. It was invaluable to have the opportunity to reflect on my experience with a skilled therapist who knows the religious life yet who had previously been outside my circle of contacts. This process soon led me to discover personal strengths and gifts that had lain fallow. With physical weakness, the spiritual and psychological elements of my being had a unique opportunity to blend and complement one another. My recuperation period became a time to rediscover myself without the constant distractions of activity and responsibility.

Once I felt well enough to do any serious thinking or reading, loss became the dominant theme. The loss of my job and of my normal ability to function, although temporary, seemed to be endless. Life choices I had made at an early age seemed only to have ruled out other options that were now irretrievable. Limitations in decision making and in the ability to function independently, inherent in the religious life, became a focus of extreme frustration; I felt that I had been prevented from living up to my potential. I imagined that my intensified need for intimacy and true understanding would have been met if I had married. Even though I was well aware that other life choices would have led to their own sets of frustrations and limitations, I needed to mourn the paths I had chosen not to explore.

For some time I found myself dwelling heavily on how much of my identity was based on what I had produced. I knew before I contracted pneumonia that I, like so many others, was living too much of my life in "work mode." I did not want to live that way. I believed that somewhere I had an innate value, but I had yet to find it. With so much time for reflection, I perceived that I had been acting on values that weren't really my own. It seemed I had been merely mimicking ideas I had learned from others without truly incorporating them. In my harsh self-criticism, I so magnified the inadequacies I saw in myself that I truly believed I had no substance. It was frightening to think that everything familiar in me was not genuine and that I would have to begin to search in some unknown direction in order to find myself.

REFLECTION AND WRITING

When asked in therapy to look at what else was going on, I came to the sudden realization that I was dwelling only on the road not taken, not on the rich (albeit less traveled) path I had chosen. With this new insight, I began to make a list of all I have: family, friends, community, talents, professional achievements. This list was the beginning of a journal, and writing soon became an essential part of my recovery process.

My physical weakness magnified the midlife issues of vulnerability. It was hard for me to be in a dependent state, even though no one made me feel that I was being a burden. Loss of control was wrenching; I was so used to being the caretaker. Yet it was in this weakened state that the Power that had been working through me and in spite of me became clear. Since a great deal of my professional experience was in cancer nursing, I had been forced to acknowledge my mortality many times. With so much time on my hands, I occasionally imagined myself in the company of the many people I had seen off on their final journey. Many of them had shown me the intimacy that comes with mutually experiencing that ultimate time of vulnerability.

Much of the process of recovery occurred for me as I sat by the ocean. The steadiness of the waves provided an endless yet ever-changing source of unity with creation and Creator. How much our culture has lost because we have insisted on trying to adapt nature to our way of thinking instead of living in closer harmony with the natural rhythms around us. The gift of time allowed me to spend hours with my thoughts and feelings and taught me to be much gentler with myself—to pass through the pounding waves to the deeper, stiller water instead of trying to calm the entire ocean.

Art, music, and poetry that I had previously enjoyed took on new meaning in the light of my experience. I found new depths and relationships in some very familiar works and discovered some I

had not known before. A newfound sense of playfulness gave me hours of delight at a time when I was physically confined. Time with the arts unleashed an awareness of myself in relation to the universe that I could recognize as familiar but had not truly defined before. There were moments of shimmering clarity that fleetingly answered age-old questions, yet those insights often slipped from my grasp and led to more questions. A convergence of my sense of the arts and my knowledge of science helped me to recognize my own spirituality, which is very much grounded in everyday reality yet can move beyond the dimensions we usually perceive.

EXPERIENCING NEW LIFE

My emergence from the midlife transition has been literal as well as figurative. As I became physically strong enough to go back to work, tasks that had previously been second nature seemed mammoth, and I truly doubted my ability as well as my stamina. A few people who reminded me of what I had to offer gently nudged me over what then seemed to be a tremendous hurdle. A stillness and peaceful confidence now resides in me that I know will remain.

For a while I felt that I had been missing out on something. Yet when I was stopped long enough to look (and it does take a long time to look), I found that what I had been missing had been there all along. The thought of a journey inward was fright-

ening to me. I feared that I would learn of so much darkness that I would not be able to find my way out. But what I found was a constant light, gentle yet brilliant, that had always been present. It was not easy to allow my husk to crack open—yet the work of preventing small cracks from opening fully was far more difficult than the more natural task of nurturing the new life that was coming forth.

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New Report Recommends Diet for Health

Perhaps the most useful document ever published on the relationship between eating, drinking, and staying healthy is a 1,300 page report issued recently by the National Research Council. Titled *Diet and Health: Implications for Reducing Chronic Disease Risk*, the report contains specific recommendations designed to help the American people reduce by at least 20 percent their risk of coronary heart disease, the country's number-one killer. Those who follow the Council's guidelines may also substantially diminish the likelihood that they will suffer from high blood pressure, stroke, cancer, obesity, liver disease, and osteoporosis.

The Council recommends that people consume no more than 30 percent of their daily calories in the form of fats and less than 10 percent in the form of saturated fats. The daily intake of cholesterol should not exceed 300 milligrams.

To decrease cholesterol intake, the report suggests restricting the consumption of egg yolks, organ meats, and certain shellfish. It advises an emphasis on fish,

lean meats, skinless poultry, and lowfat or nonfat dairy products. Carbohydrates should account for at least 55 percent of daily calories, so people should eat at least five servings daily of vegetables and fruits, along with six or more servings of starches in the form of rice, potatoes, pasta, whole-grain breads, legumes, and cereals.

The report also says that protein ought to be eaten only in moderation, since diets rich in animal protein are likely to increase the risk of colon or breast cancer. Dietary supplements, such as vitamins, mineral tablets, and fish-oil capsules, are a waste of money for most people and may be harmful in megadoses.

Daily alcohol intake, the Council recommends, should be limited to two small glasses of wine, two cans of beer, or two cocktails.

The report and its guidelines are the result of a three-year review of 5,000 studies by leading scientists, performed under the aegis of the prestigious National Academy of Sciences.

Imagining Paradise

James Torrens, S.J.

From the land of the dead, who has ever come back to tell? Dante Alighieri of Florence did in the year 1300. That, at least, is the fiction maintained in *The Divine Comedy*—which was called divine, incidentally, only after the death of the poet. Funny thing about the *Comedy*: millions have gawked their way through the tortures of Part One, the *Inferno*; a fair number, too, have struggled up the terraces of *Purgatory*, where souls “clear off the smudges of the world” and are freed from the distorted forms of love; but only a few find themselves disposed for the upward flight of Part Three, *Paradise*.

As one reads Dante, the progression may be like stepping up from pop music and jazz to folk music, then to semiclassical and Romantic music, and finally to Vivaldi and Bach. The spirit has to be at a certain pitch for Bach—and for Dante’s *Paradise*. Dante, writing in a period when writers felt no imperative to conceal themselves in their texts, openly challenged his readers at the start of *Paradise*:

Those of you sailing in a tiny boat, . . .
turn back to visit again your own shore:
don’t venture out to ocean lest perhaps,
losing me, you would stay truly lost.

(II.1.4–6)

Fair enough, many have said, daunted by the prospect of thirty-three cantos all about blessedness and God. They have not felt compelled to

follow the pilgrim to his journey’s goal, or the storyteller to his ending. One hopes that they do not give it up without a twinge. According to Carl Jung, to envision heaven is an essential human project:

A man should be able to say he had done his best to form a conception of life after death, or to create some image of it—even if he must confess his failure. For the question that is posed to him is the age-old heritage of humanity: an archetype, rich in secret life, which seeks to add itself to our own individual life in order to make it whole.

—Carl Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*
(Aniela Jaffe, ed.)

Luckily, there are more ways to visualize heaven, and many more paths to salvation, than reading and meditating on Dante. Still, with the one inspired exception of the *Apocalypse*, no other text so enriches and haunts the imagination.

Just what does happen in the final part of *La Commedia*? A happy ending, of course; the pleasing outcome, much more than incidental humor, reflects Dante’s understanding of the concept of comedy. At the finishing point, the author, in the role of pilgrim, is granted a split-second (yet also timeless) vision of God—the Holy Trinity—as three interpenetrating circles. “One seemed reflected from the other / as rainbow from rainbow, and the third /

was fire breathing equally from each" (XXXIII. 18–20).

JOURNEY INTO HEAVENS

Like the accounts of scaling Everest, however, most of *Paradise* is not so much about arrival at the peak as about stellar journeying. Dante soars with his guide, Beatrice, through many celestial levels. Heaven, suiting itself to the limited scope and tolerance of Dante's senses, projects itself for part-by-part examination into the spheres, or concentric rings, of the Ptolemaic system. These, in order, are the domains of the moon, Mercury, Venus, the sun, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, the fixed stars, and the primum mobile, that swift-moving outer wheel of the material universe whose motion is transferred to all else.

By its distribution into nine spheres, the realm of God's elect adapts itself to the ancient and medieval imagination; the blessed show themselves in a characteristic region in the heavens. As to heaven itself—the place where the blessed dwell with God—that, says the poet, moving his fiction to a new level, is what we call the empyrean, or fire, heaven. Dante, tracing a journey into the heavens, had to work from the cosmological structure common to his age, although he added to the scheme of Ptolemy the primum mobile, which Aristotle had postulated to explain the transfer of movement from an unmoved source. Dante had a strong literary precedent for visionary use of this celestial geography: the *Somnium Scipionis* (*Scipio's Dream*), the one portion of Cicero's *De Re Publica* that was known in the Middle Ages.

Toward the end of *Paradise*, the pilgrim to heaven finds all the blessed gathered in the celestial rose, "the great flower, heavy with petals" (XXXI.10–11). It is a vast consistory of all the redeemed from Old Testament times to New, illuminated by divine light. He records his awe in an unforgettable simile:

If the barbarians, coming from [the North]
and seeing the massive workmanship of Rome,
have been struck dumb, because the Lateran
surpassed all mortal objects,
I, who from the human to the divine,
from time had come to the eternal,
and from Florence to a people just and sane—
what awe must not have then welled up in me!
. . . just like the pilgrim full of excitement
viewing the shrine where he fulfills his vow
with hopes of telling exactly how it is.
(XXI.31, 34–40, 43–5)

How to tell his vision? The pilgrim as author is aware from the start that he is essaying the impossible. Needing help from every source, secular and sacred, he invokes a Fatherly Apollo—that is to say,

a classical as well as Christian power of inspiration. He will seek particular help from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, or *Book of Transformations*, to present the details and aspects of his ascent, which he likens to St. Paul's rapture into the holy realm. In general, he will seek to give an imaginative structure to the whole—to "display the shadow of the blessed realm that's printed on my brain" (I.23–4). And indeed, what the imagination most takes away from *The Divine Comedy* is the stellar highlights—the strong symbolic coloring or visual orchestration given to the various realms.

In the realm of Mars, an image of the Crucified One is flashed upon the background with certain of the blessed—ex-crusaders of the faith—darting through it toward Dante like sparks. In the realm of the sun, the great theologians (including a few who were suspect to the keepers of orthodoxy, such as Siger of Brabant and Joachim of Flora) dance around Dante in three concentric circles, like candle flames on a revolving candelabra. In the realm of Jupiter, the just rulers (including Solomon) group themselves, like lights, into a kind of banner that says in Latin, "Love justice, all you who judge the earth." They then form themselves into a talking eagle, symbolic of justice—perhaps the most startling image of *Paradise*.

Dante was a philosophic poet, someone who could vividly envision truth. George Santayana recognized this, ranking Dante with Lucretius and Goethe in his *Three Philosophical Poets*. So did T.S. Eliot, who paid Dante the greater tribute of incorporating images and lines from his poetry into *The Waste Land*, *Ash Wednesday*, and *Four Quartets*. That abstract, mystical image in *Burnt Norton* (the first quartet), "the still point of the turning world," comes directly from canto XXVIII of *Paradise*. The pilgrim glimpses the burning deity as tinier than the smallest visible star; no eye, however, can bear its piercing ray. Nine circles wheel about it—the nine choirs of angels—with the closest, the seraphim, whirling the most swiftly and intently. Two cantos later, the angels are visualized in their role of service to the elect, passing on to them the light of glory, which takes the form of a river. As the pilgrim remembers it,

From this bright river vivid sparks came forth
and went into the flowers on either side
like rubies ringed about with gold;
then, as if the scents had gone to their head,
they plunged back into the amazing stream,
and if one entered, another one came forth.
(XXX.64–9)

PERSPECTIVE INCLUDES THE PRESENT

As we read *Paradise* we sooner or later ask ourselves, What is it really about—this world or the

next? Is "Paradise" supposed to mean for us a merciful forgetting of this world? In some respects, yes. In the sphere of Venus, last of the first three circles and, like the spheres of the moon and Mercury, still touched by some shadow of the earth's imperfection, Dante meets Cunizza—sister to the bloodthirsty Count Ezzolino, legendary for her lovers (among them Sordello, the troubador poet) and her string of husbands, renowned too for her generosity of temperament. She tells him:

... Here I shine
because this star once dazed me with its light.
But cheerfully I now absolve myself
for placement here.

(IX.32–5)

Cunizza can forget her excesses. So can a certain Romeo, once a chamberlain to Count Raymond Berengar IV of Provence, forget his unfair treatment at his master's hand. For Romeo, after laboring for Raymond and arranging that his four daughters be married advantageously, fell afoul of the slander of the envious, which his master believed. Romeo was sent out, "impoverished and old," to beg his livelihood "crust by crust" (VI.139, 141). But in the realm of Mercury we have a Romeo, Dante is told, with all his griefs behind him; "inside the present pearl / the light of Romeo gives light" (VI.127–8).

Dante's Paradise gives us, as any good image of Paradise should, a new perspective on our day-to-day preoccupations. In Cicero's *Somnium*, the heavenly guide tells his grandson Scipio to look down on the Roman Empire from a great height: "Now you see how small it is in spite of its proud name!" Just so, from Gemini, in the realm of the fixed stars, Dante follows the instruction of Beatrice to look back down beneath them:

I turned my gaze through each of the seven
spheres, and such a view attained of this globe
I had to laugh over its mean appearance.
The threshing floor which makes us so ferocious,
appeared to me entire, from hills to deltas;
then back my eyes turned to those lovely eyes.

(XXII.133–5, 151, 153–4)

Beatrice, who is a source of illumination for Dante, here helps him to see everything from the standpoint of eternity—has him, in the words of the old Latin prayer, "look down," literally, upon the things of earth so as to love heaven. An eloquent outburst on this very subject is put in the poet's mouth in the heaven of the theologians, as the pilgrim is about to hear St. Thomas Aquinas, the Dominican, sing the praises of St. Francis of Assisi.

How senseless the absorption of poor mortals
how faulty all the syllogisms are

by which you take wing down to what is base!
One was pursuing codes of law, and one
the axioms of medicine, one priesthood,
one holding sway by force or sophistry;
one took to thieving, one to lawful trade,
one, given up to pleasures of the flesh
wore himself out, and one just took his ease,
while free from such absorptions I
into heaven far up with Beatrice
was magnificently welcomed.

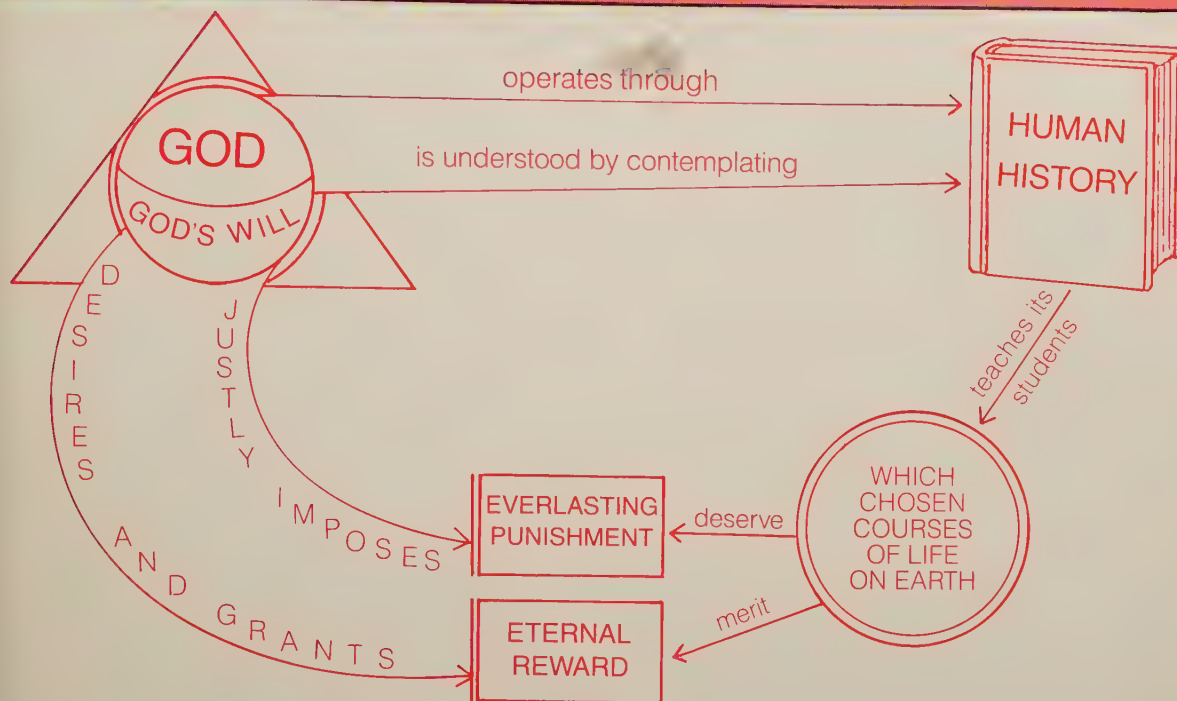
(XI.1–12)

PUBLIC FIGURES ARE CRITICIZED

At first reading, the above passage seems to say, "In heaven let there be no more interest in the earth and what goes on there." Nothing, however, could be further from the truth of Dante's text. Part three of the *The Divine Comedy* is marked by a utopian passion. The ascent from one level to the next sets off a crescendo of indignation. There is continual declamation about how the public figures of Dante's age are falling short of the models of greatness. In canto VI, Justinian, reviewing Rome's imperial destiny, the rule of the eagle, draws an invidious comparison of those times with Dante's day, marked by the greed and paltry concerns of the political parties the Guelphs and Ghibbelines. Charles Martel, who died before the fulfillment of his promise as a European ruler, chastises his relatives for the havoc they have wreaked in Sicily and Catalonia (canto VIII).

Nowhere does the poet put us as squarely back on earth as in the heaven of Mars (cantos XV to XVIII). There he is met by his great grandfather Cacciaguida, one of those heroes of the church militant who gave up his life on crusade. "My own blood!" Cacciaguida cries out to the pilgrim, with all the warmth and intensity of Aeneas reunited in Elysium with his father, Anchises (Virgil's *Aeneid*, book VI). This worthy man seems indeed to be legitimating Italian family pride. The pride, however, has for its focus a simpler, more spartan, more unblemished life: an image of the way people dressed and worked and interacted in Florence before the city filled up with hillbillies. Cacciaguida gives a touching, if touched-up, portrait of the worthies of Florence "inside the ancient circle": honest workmen in "rawhide clothes, unlined," and homemaker women dressed decently and simply, unlike the hussies of a later day. These cantos, charged with Dante's love for his home city, Florence, juxtapose an idealized picture of the earlier times with a chronicle of family decline in Dante's day. Alas, the poet laments, in Florence these days, the mutilated statue of Mars stands as an emblem of family rivalries. As for the patron saint, John the Baptist, the citizens recognize him mainly on the city's coin, the florin.

DANTE'S THEOLOGICAL VISION



Dante's indignation over the moral state of Florence is crossed by another concern that also seems very much of the earth—his keen desire to be honored as a writer. Perhaps, he hopes, this very *Comedy* will win him a welcome back into his home city. The conflict of motivation puts the pilgrim in a quandary. He tells his ancestor that in the other-worlds of hell, purgatory, and heaven, "I have earned things which, if I tell them, / many will find quite sour to the taste." So much for Dante's fame as a writer or his chance of returning from exile! And so much, he must have thought, for the similarity of his story to *Scipio's Dream*, in which the young man Scipio hears his grandfather, the illustrious general Africanus, predict his future public greatness.) If I speak out, says the ambitious Dante, my hopes of acclaim are doomed. Let your conscience direct you, says his stern ancestor. You will face continuing hostility and will have to live off of the charity of strangers—for instance, your patron, Can Grande of Verona. Too bad, but remember your priorities and your mission.

... Avoiding every lie
make your entire vision manifest,
and where it itches let the people scratch.
You will experience the salty taste

of someone else's bread, and know how hard
to climb—up, down—by someone else's stair.
(XVII.127–9, 58–60)

So again, is Dante's *Comedy* about the next world or this one? The poet, not a person to leave such a question hanging, addresses it when presenting *Paradise* to his patron, Can Grande.

Considering the subject matter of my poem as a whole, it is the state of souls after death; so the subject of this part is the state of blessed souls after death. But if you look at it allegorically, the subject of the whole is how by meriting or failing to merit in the exercise of free will, a person justly deserves reward or punishment; so in this part we see how for his merits he justly deserves reward.

The allegory of *Paradise*, its other essential meaning, is the image it gives of those on this earth who are truly deserving. Put another way, it is about being in God's grace, corresponding or cooperating with the good impulses that God sends and that his Spirit inculcates. Dante stretches the Italian language with coinages that signify the process of interiorization, or being turned to God within our-

The commanding metaphor in *Paradise* is that of ascent

selves. He prefixes the preposition *in*, with startling effect, to many a verb, noun, and even adjective, roughly once in each canto of *Paradise*. The blessed "ingod" themselves; the gathering of saints "in-flowers"; Beatrice, Dante's guide, "imparadises" his mind. I wish, says Dante on one occasion to Cunizza, that "I in-you'd me as you in-me you"—in other words, that gazing upon all things in God's mind, I could have you within me as accurately and transparently as I am in you.

CHURCH DRAWS REPROACH

With this perspective, it should not surprise anyone that Dante speaks scathingly of the church in *Paradise*. When they discuss the contemporary church, all the sainted churchmen Dante meets, to say nothing of the three major apostles, are suffused with the very anger of Jesus cleansing the temple. Thomas Aquinas laments the Dominicans' straying from their first fervor (canto XI), and St. Bonaventure says the same about the followers of St. Francis (canto XII). The poet himself lashes out at Pope John XXII for excommunicating people as a weapon of policy (canto XVIII). When the austere St. Peter Damian describes the fancy equipage of cardinals, those with him in the heaven of contemplatives echo his scorn with "a high piercing cry" that leaves the pilgrim thunderstruck (canto XXI). But even this pales before the burning diatribe of St. Peter on the conduct of his successors, the popes (canto XXVII).

The commanding metaphor in *Paradise* is that of ascent, a metaphor implanted in the medieval mind by St. Bonaventure's *Itinerarium Mentis in Deum* (*Journey of the Mind to God*) and by the Parisian monks of the Abbey of St. Victor, espe-

cially Hugh and Richard. In *The Catholic Encyclopedia* we are told of Hugh: "The core of his teachings . . . is that the soul in ascension towards God tends to acquire or rather to reacquire the gift of wisdom or contemplation, i.e., that particular knowledge of God that man possessed in Paradise, but lost by original sin. Unlike other writers, he draws a sharp line between mystical contemplation and beatific vision." Dante, following these bible-commentator theologians, presents to our eyes the ascent of contemplation (as well as the mediation of angels) in the image of Jacob's ladder:

I saw, colored like gold on which a sunbeam
shines, a ladder rearing erect so high
my ray could not begin to follow it.
I also saw descending by its steps
so many splendors that I thought all lights
appearing in the sky must there be spread.
(XXI.28–33)

The ascending pilgrim displays a remarkable curiosity. This may seem special to the intellectual and insatiable Dante, but it is actually true of anyone who ever said, "When I get to heaven, I sure want to find out about such and such." Dante the pilgrim wants to find out about the cause of moon spots (canto II); whether those who are lower in heaven are unhappy about it (of course not, they tell him; "Our peace is in his will" [III.85]); why, if we needed the rejection of Jesus by the Jews in order to be saved, the Jews are said to have been "justly punished" (the answer, not too convincing, is drawn from St. Anselm's *Cur Deus Homo* [canto VII]); and even what language Adam spoke (in his treatise *On the Vernacular*, Dante had said Hebrew, but here [canto XXVI] he corrects himself to say a language long extinct).

The most interesting *dubbio*, or query, of all has to do with the salvation of the pagans. In the heaven of justice, Dante finds Ripheus, a minor character described in *The Aeneid* as "a very just man of Troy," and the emperor Trajan. Christian legend had invented a saving intercession, a recall from the dead by the prayers of St. Gregory, for the Roman emperor held up by history for admiration. But the poet, on his own initiative, decides on the salvation of Ripheus, claiming that God must have given such a good person a foresight of "our coming redemption" (XX.123). Dante's age determined very narrowly who could be saved: Dante, much exercised on the subject, reminds his readers that God's saving grace "wells from a source / so deep that never any creature / plunged its eye down to its bottom reach" (XX.118–20).

BEATRICE GUIDES PILGRIMAGE

The present account of *Paradise* has yet to consider, as must be obvious, the one presence in the

ext that supplies most of its binding power: Beatrice, the romantic ideal of Dante's boyhood, who on top of Mount Purgatory had come symbolically garbed to purify Dante of his failures and strayings of love.

In a white veil beneath an olive-crown
 Appeared to me a lady cloaked in green,
 And living flame the colour of her gown;

.....
 There came on me, needing no further sight,
 Just by that strange, outflowing power of hers,
 The old, old love in all its mastering might.
 (*Purgatory*, XXX.31–3, 37–9; Sayers, trans.)

The rectifying and clarifying of "the old love" is the most painful and personal experience of Dante's purgatory, fitting him for Beatrice's continued company. Since the pilgrim is bodily, his guide, we gather, remains bodily as well, among all the redeemed who project themselves in forms of light and as within light. But all we or he ever notice of Beatrice is eyes and smile.

The stock images of courtly love and of the love sonnet become the dynamic sources of Dante's transformation. When Dante confesses that Beatrice's were "the lovely eyes / which Love once made into a noose to snare me" (XXVIII.11–2), he may be alluding to Eros, but only as the instrument of divine love.

By the figure of Beatrice—literally, "the woman who makes one blessed"—Dante signifies two things simultaneously: that a romantic partner can be one's salvation, if one's attitude has the requisite purity and depth; and that God's light, or truth, comes suffused with love. In *Paradise*, where Dante has some mastery of his instincts, Beatrice can afford to drop all her reserve, to be warmly frank with him. For example, when consoling him after the prophecy of his bitter exile, and finding his gaze absorbed in hers, she tells him with a touch of humor to attend to somebody else: "Not in my eyes alone is paradise" (XVIII.21). He is free to play openly the role of her *fedel*, her faithful love-servant, just as St. Bernard will do toward the virgin Mary in the final cantos—for it is understood that Mary in her turn will keep her gaze upon the mountain of all love, to which they are each being aimed as unerringly and swiftly as arrows. The most beautiful image of Mary's orientation to God is at the start of canto XXIII: "Just as the songbird among beloved boughs," eager to find food for its beloved chicks, "anticipates [the dawn] upon an open branch, / just so my lady stood upstretching / and attentive" (lines 1, 7, 10–1).

A clear narrative rhythm is established in *Paradise*. After Dante has gazed on the lights of a given heaven and the figures they jointly form, and after conversation with its leading people, often assisted

by Beatrice, he is instinctively attracted back to her. Their interchanges call forth some of the most lyrical expressions of *Paradise*. After each of them, Dante finds himself in a new heaven, as in these lines about his passage from Gemini (in the realm of the fixed stars) to the primum mobile:

My mind smitten from ladying
 with my lady constantly, burned
 more than ever for the eyes' return to her;
 and if nature or art have set out bait
 in human flesh or in its picturing
 to catch the eyes so as to have the mind,
 all of them heaped together would seem nothing
 to match the godly delight that flooded me
 when I again focused on her smiling face.
 And the power which her look bestowed on me
 took me from the fair next of Leda
 and shot me to the very swiftest heaven.
 (XXVII.88–99)

LIGHT SYMBOLIZES CHRIST

The reader of *Paradise* is quite likely to be one whose study and devotion have centered on the person of Jesus Christ. Such a person is bound to ask, Among all the constellations of the blessed, where is the light of Christ? The answer has to come piecemeal. First of all, each of the holy ones—but in a particular way, Beatrice—is a Christ-bearer for Dante, reflecting Christ and preparing Dante for the *lumen gloriae*, the light of Christ's glory, which is not the same as the *lumen gratiae*, the light of his grace. The sublimity of this goal of glory is intimated in a vision that proves too much for Dante.

I saw, above the many thousand lamps,
 a sun illuminating each of them,
 as our sun lights the celestial faces;
 amidst that vivid light so clearly
 did its substance, radiant, appear
 within my eyes, that I could not bear it.
 (XXIII.28–33)

The glory of the Lord does come to Dante along the way, but only in a momentary flash, amidst the heavenly cross of lights in Mars.

What I'm remembering outstrips my powers;
 the cross issued a lightning stroke of Christ
 so that I find no fit comparison;
 but any who takes the cross, following Christ,
 shall yet forgive me what I here let drop,
 having seen whitely dawn the flash of Christ.
 (XIV.103–8)

My translation of *Paradise* does not reproduce the *terza rima*—the triple, interlocking rhyme—to

which only Dorothy Sayers has been able to do justice in English. Besides the risk of distorting the meaning to catch the rhyme, *terza rima* poses another continual challenge: whereas Italian (with its many words that end in vowels) has only five vowel sounds, English has about twelve, plus diphthongs; thus, Dante could find many more rhymes for any word in Italian than a translator finds available in English. In my translation of *Paradise*, the reader does get to hear an unusual effect that Dante produced. He inculcated reverence for the name of Christ by refusing to rhyme any other word with it; instead he repeated it thrice. He used the same tactic on three other occasions in *Paradise*.

As to the humanity of Christ, we find it most directly intimated in the man who the Middle Ages thought was most like Christ: Francis of Assisi. Francis is represented as a *fedel*, a love servant, of Lady Poverty, who was up on the cross with Christ when even Mary had to stay below; it is to Francis that Christ transmits his wounds (canto XI). Later, Dante compares his excitement upon seeing St. Bernard, that paragon of medieval devotion, to the countryman from Croatia coming to see the relic of Veronica's veil and saying to himself in awe, "My Lord Jesus Christ, true God, / so this is how you

actually looked!" (XXXI.107-8). This is our closest approach in the *Comedy* to the face of Christ.

In the split second of beatific vision with which the pilgrim is graced at the very end, a trinitarian vision, "our own likeness," is shown to Dante in the second person. The vision leaves all his faculties numbed; the poet can hardly say more. His concluding note is that hereafter his life will be governed wholly "by Love which moves the sun and other stars." The opening line of *Paradise* had been about "the glory of the One who moves all things"; the closing line makes it clear that this unmoved mover, God, is Love.

Note: The translation of Dante's Paradise used throughout this essay is the author's own, as yet unpublished.



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Religious People Guilty of Self-Neglect

Sister Marianna Torrano, R.C.S.J., a clinical psychologist, lists depression, stress, extreme conscientiousness, panic attacks, and substance abuse among the emotional problems of religious women and men today. She says that the San Francisco clinic at which she works, Consultation to Religion Personnel, mainly serves "people who are bright and extremely dedicated, who have had psychological problems accumulate unnoticed for years, and who are now experiencing noticeable symptoms of those problems."

In the magazine *San Francisco Catholic*, Dr. Torrano explains that "people who learned in childhood to be good people, who learned their needs don't matter, who learned that what matters is helping others—these people ultimately learn self-neglect. They lose touch with their own emotions, because their emotions weren't considered. They begin to accumulate layers of repression and resentment, and this begins to impinge on their work, on their sense of well-being. They begin to feel tired a lot, to have headaches, to be snappy to others, to be rigid. They can see the tiredness or the headaches as problems, but it's

hard for them to see the underlying emotional needs."

Dr. Torrano says her clinical experience has taught her that religious persons are inclined to "confuse depression with spiritual aridity, think of anger always as sin, mislabel sadness as self-pity . . . Religious people think that because they serve others, they shouldn't have problems themselves, that somehow they're to blame if they do have problems. They think these problems are shameful. They think, 'I feel so bad, I must be bad.'" Religious people, Dr. Torrano has observed, too often respond to their personal psychological needs with spiritual maxims. We say, for example, "we have crosses to bear," when these crosses really are things we can and should change.

Dr. Torrano notes that the changes in the church that were initiated by Vatican Council II were difficult for many religious persons to accept. But "they went along and never expressed their grief for the old beloved structures they miss. These people never gave themselves a period of mourning for these structures. They felt it was unacceptable to say 'I liked it back then, and I miss it.'"



Human Development: A Worldwide Effort

During the past several years, staff members of the Jesuit Educational Center for Human Development have provided workshops, courses, and programs, along with professional consultations, throughout the world. These presentations have been offered for religious leaders, spiritual directors, formation personnel, pastoral counselors, clergy, religious, and laity. Our staff welcomes invitations to travel, especially to Third World areas, as well as to other regions where topics and issues of the type featured in HUMAN DEVELOPMENT can be profitably discussed. Some of the locations where we have already conducted programs are indicated on this map of the world.

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| ALABAMA
1 Montgomery | HAWAII
11 Honolulu | MONTANA
20 Billings | GUYANA
45 Georgetown | KOREA
57 Kunsan |
| ALASKA
2 Anchorage | ILLINOIS
12 Chicago
13 Moline | NEW MEXICO
21 Santa Fe | HONG KONG
46 | SEoul
58 |
| CALIFORNIA
3 Los Angeles
4 Oakland
5 San Diego
6 San Francisco | IOWA
14 Sioux City | NEW YORK
22 New York | INDIA
47 Bombay
48 New Delhi
49 Ranchi | MEXICO
59 Acapulco |
| COLORADO
7 Denver | LOUISIANA
15 New Orleans | OHIO
23 Cincinnati | AUSTRALIA
37 Melbourne
38 Perth
39 Sydney | PERU
60 Lima |
| DELAWARE
8 Wilmington | MASSACHUSETTS
16 Boston
17 Worcester | OREGON
24 Portland | IRELAND
50 Dublin | PHILIPPINES
61 Manila
62 Clark Field |
| FLORIDA
9 West Palm Beach | MICHIGAN
18 East Lansing | TEXAS
27 Dallas
28 Houston | ITALY
51 Rome | TAIWAN
63 Taipei
64 Taichung |
| GEORGIA
10 Atlanta | MISSOURI
19 St. Louis | VERMONT
29 Manchester | JAMAICA
52 Kingston | THAILAND
65 Bangkok |
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53 Tokyo
54 Okinawa | ZIMBABWE
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Book-of-the-Year Announcement

Among the specific aspects of the human person that need careful nourishing by parents, teachers, clergy, and others involved in the task of fostering personal development, none is more challenging and difficult to discuss than sexuality. The goal of providing accurate information, useful guidelines, and the example of a sexual life lived ethically and maturely is formidable for anyone, whether married or celibate. Until recent years, helpful literature on the topic of sexuality has been remarkably scarce, particularly books that view human inclinations, responses, and behaviors from a point of view that reflects Christian values and ideals. Thorough scientific research, theological validation, painstaking instruction, and effective guidance are prerequisites if the young are to be formed spiritually and morally for sexual maturity. To provide this priceless assistance, most adults themselves require instruction; even more, they need help in clarifying and evaluating their own experience of sexuality so that they can speak confidently, comfortably, and authoritatively about sex and its place in the Christian way of life.

An outstanding contribution to the literature on human sexuality, written by psychologist Evelyn Easton Whitehead and theologian James D. Whitehead, members of the associate faculty at Loyola University in Chicago, is the 1988 book *A Sense of Sexuality: Christian Love and Intimacy*, published by Doubleday in New York. The authors, already widely known for their earlier writings, including *Christian Life Patterns*, *Seasons of Strength*, and *The*

Emerging Laity, have provided in their latest work an exploration of the relationship between sexuality and the life of faith, with special attention to Christian tradition, our contemporary culture, and the experience of Christians today. Because the Whiteheads' analysis of the complex issues of sexuality, intimacy, and love—viewed in the contexts of marriage, single life, celibacy, and friendship—is so solidly reasoned, inspiringly enriched by faith, and enjoyably styled, we believe that they, along with their publisher and editors, unquestionably deserve the HUMAN DEVELOPMENT Book-of-the-Year Award for *A Sense of Sexuality*.

Especially useful for readers are the "reflective exercises" the authors have included at the end of each chapter to facilitate the assessment of one's personal experience of sexuality and issues related to it. Also extremely valuable are the "additional resources" appended to every chapter, including titles, authors, and comments on recently published books with a Christian perspective on sexuality. The Whiteheads deserve profound gratitude for the generosity with which they communicate their scholarship and life experience. We recognize the importance of their literary ministry and congratulate them most sincerely for the splendid way they accomplish it year after year.



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